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Letter dated 9 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I wish to refer to the letter dated 10 February 2017 from the representative of the Israeli regime, containing unsubstantiated allegations against my country (see S/2017/123). While I categorically reject the misleading information, lies and allegations contained in that letter, I also wish to bring the following to your attention:

1. The above-mentioned letter is replete with baseless speculations about the name, range, performance and technical characteristics of a missile. The letter, once again, shows that the officials of the Israeli regime find no limits in lying and engaging in disinformation campaigns against Iran.

2. As the armed forces of almost all States possess some kind of missile to meet the requirements of their defence forces, Iran's indigenous missiles are an indivisible part of its conventional deterrence and defensive capabilities. No universal norm, treaty or agreement bans or limits the development and testing of missiles equipped with conventional capabilities for self-defence requirements. Moreover, nothing in the Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) prohibits Iran's conventional missile activities. In this context, any demand for the cessation of Iran's legitimate and conventional defence activities is groundless and unwarranted.

3. The Israeli regime's entire history is full of aggression against its neighbours and other countries in the Middle East region and beyond — at least 14 times since 1948. In contrast, Iran has not attacked any country in the past two centuries. Given such a dark track record, plus the threats and intimidations that we are facing on an almost daily basis from this regime (please refer to my letter dated 19 May 2015 (S/2015/353)), the hysterical attempts by the Israeli regime to seek international sympathy and favour by claiming that it is in fact the one that is under threat are nothing but manipulative propaganda.

4. Furthermore, Israel continues to flout all international regimes governing weapons of mass destruction by refusing to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, and thereby is the only obstacle lying in the way of establishing a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Indeed, nuclear weapons in the hands of this regime pose the most serious threat to the security of all States in the Middle East and to the non-proliferation regime. The Security Council has the responsibility to effectively address this threat.

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5. The next time that the Permanent Representative of the Israeli regime decides to accuse others of the violation of Security Council resolutions, he should remember that his regime has arrogantly and flagrantly violated at least 86 resolutions adopted by the Security Council as a result of Israel's acts of aggression and occupation, as well as its well-documented atrocities and war crimes against the Palestinian people. Just to refresh memories, the growing list of Security Council resolutions utterly violated by Israel consist of the following: 54 (1948), 89 (1950), 93 (1951), 100 (1953), 101 (1953), 106 (1955), 111 (1956), 119 (1956), 171 (1962), 228 (1966), 233 (1967), 234 (1967), 236 (1967), 237 (1967), 242 (1967), 248 (1968), 250 (1968), 251 (1968), 252 (1968), 256 (1968), 259 (1968), 262 (1968), 265 (1969), 267 (1969), 270 (1969), 271 (1969), 279 (1970), 280 (1970), 285 (1970), 298 (1971), 313 (1972), 316 (1972), 317 (1972), 332 (1973), 337 (1973), 347 (1974), 425 (1978), 427 (1978), 446 (1979), 450 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980), 467 (1980), 468 (1980), 469 (1980), 471 (1980), 476 (1980), 478 (1980), 484 (1980), 487 (1981), 497 (1981), 501 (1982), 509 (1982), 515 (1982), 517 (1982), 518 (1982), 520 (1982), 521 (1982), 573 (1985), 592 (1986), 605 (1987), 607 (1988), 608 (1988), 611 (1988), 636 (1989), 641 (1989), 672 (1990), 673 (1990), 681 (1990), 694 (1991), 726 (1992), 799 (1992), 904 (1994), 1073 (1996), 1322 (2000), 1402 (2002), 1403 (2002), 1405 (2002), 1435 (2002), 1544 (2004), 1701 (2006), 1860 (2009) and 2334 (2016). This appalling track record is enough to leave no moral standing or credibility for the Israeli regime to render judgment about others' alleged violations of Security Council resolutions.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraphs 50 and 52 of Security Council resolution 2277 (2016). It covers major developments that have occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since my report of 29 December 2016 (S/2016/1130). The present report describes progress in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and provides an update and makes recommendations on adjustments to the Mission in support of the political transition and its preparedness to address security risks and monitor and report on human rights violations and abuses.

II. Major developments

A. Political situation

2. On 19 December 2016, the second and final constitutional term of the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Joseph Kabila, expired. The political tensions that had been rising steadily throughout 2016 erupted again, as many demonstrations across the country turned violent. On 31 December, mediation efforts led by the Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo (CENCO) culminated in the conclusion of a new political agreement to govern the transitional period until the holding of elections. The agreement, which was signed by representatives of the signatories and non-signatories of the political agreement signed on 18 October 2016, helped defuse political tensions, most notably in Kinshasa.

3. More than two months after its signing, however, implementation of the new political agreement remains stalled. On 10 January 2017, CENCO launched a new round of negotiations to achieve a compromise on the special provisions governing the implementation of the political agreement. Consensus was reached on a non-hierarchical vice-presidency of the Conseil national de suivi de l'accord (CNSA) and its composition, designating Étienne Tshisekedi, the former leader of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS) and the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales de la République démocratique du Congo acquises au changement, as its head. The signatories also agreed on a timeline to implement

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the political agreement, which envisages the operationalization of CNSA, the submission of lists for the reshuffling of the Independent National Electoral Commission and the publication of the electoral calendar by 15 April.

4. The continued lack of agreement among the signatories on the modalities to designate the Prime Minister remains a major obstacle to progress. In a meeting with the CENCO leadership on 20 February, the President reiterated his request for three names to be put forward for the position of Prime Minister and called for a shift in focus from power-sharing arrangements to the organization of elections. The Rassemblement, for its part, continues to insist on a sole candidate, in accordance with the political agreement of 31 December 2016. Disagreement also persists between the ruling majority and the Rassemblement on the allocation of the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Defence and Justice in the transitional government.

5. The passing on 1 February of Mr. Tshisekedi has also hampered the nomination of the Prime Minister and the establishment of CNSA. The ruling majority and the Rassemblement also disagree on the future role of CENCO, with the former opposed to CENCO continuing its mediation role beyond the negotiation of the special provisions. In February, Catholic parishes and seminaries in Kananga, Kinshasa and Lubumbashi were attacked, possibly as a result of growing frustration among segments of the population with delays in the CENCO-led negotiations on the special provisions. On 2 March, Félix Tshisekedi, the son of Étienne Tshisekedi and a Deputy Secretary-General of UDPS, became president of the Rassemblement, and Pierre Lumbi from the Groupe des sept opposition coalition took over leadership of the Conseil des sages of the Rassemblement.

6. Meanwhile, the voter registration process continued, following the completion of a pilot phase on 29 November 2016. In mid-December, the Independent National Electoral Commission launched voter registration in 2 of the 4 operational areas (covering 13 provinces). On 23 February 2017, the Commission reported that 15 million people had been registered. Registration is expected to begin in the remaining 2 areas (covering the remaining 13 provinces) in March and April. MONUSCO continued to support voter registration. As at 28 February, MONUSCO had transported, mostly by air, more than 2,000 tons of voter registration materials to locations throughout the country. The Mission is expected to complete the transportation of registration materials by the end of March.

7. The funding of the elections continues to be an issue. On 15 February, Budget Minister Pierre Kangudia announced that it would be challenging for the Government to raise the estimated $1.8 billion required to hold elections. On the same day, the Minister of Communications and Media and Spokesperson for the Government, Lambert Mende, indicated that Mr. Kangudia had been misunderstood and that the Government was committed to holding presidential elections in 2017. The President of the Independent National Electoral Commission subsequently stated that the Commission's updated budget for the electoral cycle was $1.3 billion, covering all elections. As at 24 February, the Government had reportedly disbursed to the Commission $180 million of the $300 million it had pledged in 2016 to organize the elections.

8. The multipartner basket fund for the Projet d' appui au cycle électoral au Congo (PACEC) to support the electoral cycle, managed by the United Nations Development Programme, remains funded at 6 per cent of the required amount of $123.3 million, partly due to donor concerns regarding uncertainties surrounding arrangements for the political transition. Lack of funding for PACEC is limiting civic education, the deployment of election monitors and other important types of support for the electoral process.

B. Security situation

9. There have been major shifts in the security landscape in the country during the reporting period. Violence and threats to civilians are no longer concentrated in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, as community-based violence and inter-ethnic clashes have spread from areas already affected by armed conflict, such as in North and South Kivu provinces, to Tanganyika, the three Kasai provinces and Kongo Central. Armed group activity in the east has increased, particularly with the resurfacing of the former Mouvement du 23 mars (M23). The resurgence of violence across the country has been exacerbated by the current uncertain political situation, as well as by the manipulation of grievances for political ends and support to armed militias by some political actors. The increasing use of self-defence militia, acting along ethnic lines, points to a growing sense of insecurity and uncertainty. The risk of violence related to elections, mainly in urban areas, is also increasing, and is expected to rise further the longer the implementation of the political agreement remains stalled, prolonging the current political uncertainty.

Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

10. Civilians continue to be seriously affected by the ongoing activities of armed groups in North and South Kivu, Ituri and Haut-Uélé provinces, resulting in continued operations by the Congolese armed forces and MONUSCO. Although under military pressure, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and the Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI) have managed to retain the capacity to conduct destabilizing activities.

11. In North Kivu, 42 people were killed between 24 and 31 December 2016 in a series of attacks by presumed ADF forces, or their affiliates, around Eringeti, in Beni territory. Clashes among FDLR and its splinter group, the Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie-Ubwiyunge (CNRD), the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and Mai-Mai groups, caused significant population displacement. Intercommunal conflict, particularly between the Hutu and Nande communities, also intensified during the reporting period.

12. Coordinated operations by FARDC and MONUSCO in January helped disrupt the activities of ADF and other armed groups. The Mission deployed forward bases on the border with Ituri province, near Beni town, and in Mamudioma, near the ADF stronghold known as the "triangle" area. It also reinforced its presence in Itebero, Walikale territory, to investigate allegations of human rights violations and increased patrolling in Nyanzalé in response to rumours of an attack by armed groups on the civilian population. A forward base was extended in Luhanga to protect the site of internally displaced persons from the Hutu community that had been attacked by Mai-Mai elements in November.

13. MONUSCO continued to support FARDC military operations against FDLR and undertook unilateral operations to maintain military pressure on the armed group by targeting its leadership and its key sources of income, including the charcoal trade. In late December, a number of FDLR camps and charcoal taxation checkpoints were dismantled during such operations. In late December and in January 2017, a significant amount of FDLR communications equipment and a number of FDLR internal documents were recovered near Virunga National Park.

14. On 27 January 2017, following reports that a group of former M23 elements had entered North Kivu from Uganda and were in North Kivu, two FARDC attack helicopters involved in an operation against the former M23 elements crashed near the Mikeno and Karisimbi mountains in Rutshuru territory, close to the Rwandan

border. MONUSCO helped rescue five crew members and FARDC soldiers from the crash site during subsequent ground operations against suspected former M23 elements. MONUSCO recovered seven bodies (two crew members, an FARDC colonel and four alleged former M23 elements) and FARDC detained one former M23 element. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo subsequently deployed 700 additional FARDC troops to North Kivu to reinforce its presence on the ground. MONUSCO is conducting regular reconnaissance missions in North Kivu, in close coordination with FARDC and the Congolese authorities, to monitor the movements of former M23 elements into the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

15. In Ituri, during the month of January, MONUSCO documented 40 human rights violations involving the FRPI. MONUSCO and FARDC conducted seven coordinated operations against FRPI, during which 27 of their fighters were killed, 1 was wounded and 2 were apprehended. Intercommunal violence between the Hema and Lendu communities subsided, following an intercommunity dialogue launched in Irumu territory by the provincial authorities, with MONUSCO support.

16. In South Kivu, movements by armed groups were reported, particularly in Fizi, Shabunda and Uvira territories. Significant FDLR movements were also reported in Mwenga territory. In the Ruzizi plains, FARDC blocked cross-border movements by Burundian armed elements into Uvira territory, with some Forces nationales de libération (FNL) elements killed during an operation. MONUSCO also conducted operations with FARDC, targeting FNL camps around Sange, Uvira territory, with the aim to restrict their freedom of movement and access to resources.

17. In Haut-Uélé, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) continued to attack civilians in north-western Dungu territory and along the Bangadi-Niangara axis, pillaging food supplies and abducting civilians. Furthermore, cross-border movement by armed elements from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army continued. South Sudanese combatants have also reportedly infiltrated some refugee camps in Haut-Uélé. MONUSCO extended the deployment of a forward base in Doruma, on the border with South Sudan, to reinforce its presence in the area and support the operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as needed. The Mission has also contributed to strengthening community-based protection of civilian mechanisms in villages along the border with South Sudan to improve early warning and response.

18. Against the backdrop of continued activity of armed groups in the east, members of some armed groups continue to surrender, with new combatants entering the national programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, which is supported by MONUSCO. Under the programme, the Government has completed the return of 3,763 former combatants from the Kitona and Kamina camps to their communities in eight provinces, mainly in the eastern part of the country, while some 150 former combatants in Kamina and 514 in Kitona started the first stage of reinsertion in January. MONUSCO continued its community-violence reduction activities, launching 20 projects in the eastern provinces during the reporting period.

19. Both Congolese and foreign combatants have presented themselves to MONUSCO to enter disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement or repatriation processes, respectively. That includes 42 Congolese combatants, of whom half were from the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda-Forces combattantes Abacunguzi (FLDR-FOCA) group; 12 from various Mai-Mai groups; 8 Nyatura; and 2 from CNRD; as well as 32 foreign combatants, the majority of whom were

FDLR-FOCA and have been repatriated to Rwanda. The Mission continues to provide support to 298 disarmed FDLR and 1,050 dependants who were part of the incomplete voluntary disarmament process in Kanyobagonga, Kisangani and Walungu camps, and to 628 SPLM/A-IO elements, including 28 minors, accommodated on MONUSCO premises in Dungu and Goma.

Emerging areas of violence

20. The resurgence of violence in areas that were, up until recently, relatively calm has taken a heavy toll on civilians in a number of areas where MONUSCO has a minimal presence.

21. In Tanganyika, fighting between the Twa and Luba communities spread into five of its six territories, claiming the lives of nearly 150 people and displacing 433,777 as at 28 February 2017. In mid-January, clashes between Twa and Luba youth in Moba resulted in the death of five civilians and significant population displacement. MONUSCO reinforced its presence in Manono and facilitated the deployment of FARDC to Moba, Monde and Nyunzu to disperse various militia elements occupying those areas. The Mission also supported community-based conflict resolution initiatives in the territories affected by conflict.

22. Violence escalated sharply in the Kasai provinces and Lomami province, due to clashes between national security forces and members of the Kamuina Nsapu militia. In January, at least 40 people were killed, mostly by militia members, in clashes with Congolese security forces in Dibaya territory, Kasai Central. Between 25 January and 5 February, clashes with the Congolese security forces reportedly resulted in the death of at least 22 militia members. From 6 to 8 February, in Nguema, in Kasai Central, at least 47 people, including militia members and civilians, were reportedly killed during a military operation led by FARDC. From 9 to 13 February, further military action by FARDC against the militia resulted in the alleged killing of at least 84 presumed militia elements in and around Tshimbulu, Kasai Central. The militia reportedly killed two local chiefs for not cooperating with them and increased the recruitment and use of children in the militia. The Government has launched investigations into allegations of human rights violations in the Kasai provinces.

23. The Mission deployed interdisciplinary mobile monitoring and response teams, which are specifically designed to deploy to areas where MONUSCO no longer has a presence or its presence is limited, to several areas affected by the violence in the Kasai provinces. The aims of the teams are to verify reports of serious human rights violations, improve the Mission's situational awareness and engage with local and provincial authorities, communities and civil society. A company from the rapidly deployable battalion in South Kivu was deployed to Kananga on 23 December 2016 and relieved by a company of MONUSCO Force reserves from Kinshasa on 20 January 2017. On 22 February, an additional company was deployed to Kananga in order to establish additional forward bases and early warning systems in key areas of the Kasai provinces. MONUSCO used its reinforced presence to support local conflict-resolution initiatives, including initial disarmament discussions with the Kamuina Nsapu militia. Provisional authorities in Kasai Oriental engaged in efforts, supported by MONUSCO, to enlist the support of community leaders in defusing tensions in their areas and persuading local youth not to join the Kamuina Nsapu militia.

24. In Kongo Central, political tensions rose sharply in the lead up to and immediately after the expiration of the President's mandate. In January, in Kimpese, the residence of the Vice-President of the Bundu Dia Mayala (BDM) political party, who was recently appointed as Vice-Minister of Infrastructure, Public Works and

Reconstruction was burned and looted by supporters of the President of BDM. Subsequent clashes between BDM supporters, the national police and FARDC resulted in the death of two presumed BDM supporters and one police officer. In February, nine civilians were reportedly shot dead by the police as a crowd attempted to recover the bodies of the dead BDM supporters from a local mortuary. The national police also clashed with sympathizers of BDM in Kinshasa and surrounded the residence of the leader of BDM supporter and a member of Parliament, Ne Muanda Nsemi, who is wanted by the judiciary for sedition, resulting in 2 BDM elements killed, a number of civilians injured and 22 people arrested. On 4 March, in Kinshasa, the police arrested Mr. Nsemi and his wife in an operation during which one police officer and three BDM elements were killed. The police also seized three firearms and arrested 307 people, 170 of whom were released the same day.

25. In Kinshasa, in the lead-up to the end of the President's term on 19 December 2016, MONUSCO reinforced its presence with two additional companies, bringing its strength in the city to one battalion, until one company was redeployed to Kananga. The Mission also strengthened its tactical operations centre in Kinshasa to facilitate a coordinated Mission response to electoral violence by the Mission's police, military and human rights components. MONUSCO also trained 133 national police audit inspectors on human rights monitoring to strengthen oversight of the actions of the national police.

Regional developments

26. Efforts continued at the regional level to address the continued threat of armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In January 2017, my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Kinshasa to urge the resumption of efforts to implement the Nairobi Declarations in order to address the return of ex-M23 elements. They also met with the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, to discuss, inter alia, the issue of the former M23 elements. They also attended a meeting of the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region on the margins of the twenty-eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union in Addis Ababa. In their final communiqué, the guarantors expressed concern regarding the continued activities of armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the reported incursion by former M23 elements into the country and the prolonged presence of SPLM/A-IO elements on Congolese soil. Further developments in relation to the Framework are provided in my report on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region (S/2017/208).

27. My Special Representative and my Special Envoy also carried out joint démarches in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a view to addressing the presence of SPLM/A-IO elements on Congolese territory and concerns related to the negative impact of the conflict in South Sudan in the north-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In their exchanges on 12 and 13 January 2017 with national and provincial authorities, including the Chief of Staff of the President, the Vice-Prime Minister for the Interior, the Vice-Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs and representatives of the SPLM/A-IO, they emphasized the need to seek a durable political solution, supported by regional actors. My Special Representative and my Special Envoy also discussed the matter with the President of Uganda.

C. Human rights situation

28. The human rights situation continued to deteriorate amid rising violence and political turmoil. In 2016, MONUSCO documented 5,190 human rights violations throughout the country, which represents an increase of 30 per cent compared with 2015. The activities of several armed groups in conflict-affected provinces also increased, resulting in many human rights violations, particularly in North Kivu (1,910 violations), Ituri (749 violations) and Haut-Katanga (328 violations).

29. In 2016, State agents were responsible for 64 per cent of the total number of documented violations, including the extrajudicial killing of 480 civilians. The national police remained the main perpetrators of human rights violations, totalling 1,553 abuses, representing 30 per cent of the total number of documented cases in 2016. That represents an increase of 65 per cent compared with 2015.

30. Throughout 2016, armed groups accounted for 36 per cent of the total number of violations, which included the killing of 718 civilians. Of the 1,871 human rights abuses attributable to armed groups, FRPI elements were responsible for most human rights abuses, with 516 incidents documented, mostly looting. FDLR elements remained particularly active in the territory of Rutshuru, North Kivu, and were responsible for a large number of summary executions (150 victims), and violations of the right to the liberty and security of person (225 victims). ADF and suspected affiliated groups were the main perpetrators of summary executions, with at least 230 victims.

31. In 2016, the Mission recorded 1,102 violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms linked to restrictions of democratic space, a fourfold increase compared with 2015. Particularly violent incidents were recorded during the political unrest around 19 December. Between 15 and 31 December, the Mission documented the killing by State agents of at least 40 civilians, including 5 women and 2 children, and the wounding of 147 individuals, including 14 women and 18 children. During the same period, at least 917 individuals, including 30 women and 95 children, were arrested by State agents throughout the country. Although most of those individuals were later released, more than 70 have reportedly been charged with a felony, including spiteful destruction, looting, rebellion or participation in an insurrectional movement. Many of the individuals were reportedly subjected to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment at the time of arrest or during detention.

32. There were also several cases of violence by demonstrators on 19 December. One national police officer was killed by demonstrators in Kinshasa and another was slightly injured by protestors in Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga. Demonstrators also looted and destroyed public and private property in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Luebo (Kasai), Boma and Matadi (Kongo Central).

Child protection

33. MONUSCO documented 114 grave violations against children, a slight decrease from the 120 cases documented during the previous reporting period. Children continued to be recruited and used by armed groups. The main armed groups that recruited and used children were Mai-Mai Mazembe/Union des patriotes pour la défense des innocents (14), Nyatura (12), Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové/Guidon (8), FDLR (8), Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki (7) and Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain (6). Some 7 children were killed and maimed, while 9 were abducted and 25, including 2 boys, were victims of sexual violence. In total, 61 boys and 9 girls were separated or escaped from armed groups. Two boys allegedly associated with armed groups were released from FARDC custody and handed over to MONUSCO, while 13 boys, including 2 Rwandans,

remained in FARDC detention. In 2017, as at 23 February, joint advocacy by MONUSCO and the United Nations Children's Fund has led to the release of 37 minors, ages 15 to 17, who had been detained in Kananga prison since August 2016 for alleged association with Kamuina Nsapu militia activities. Armed groups also carried out two documented attacks against schools and one against a health-care centre.

Sexual violence

34. MONUSCO recorded a sharp increase in conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated in the context of intensifying inter-ethnic conflict in Kalemie territory, Tanganyika province. Following an investigation mission from 23 to 25 January 2017, MONUSCO confirmed the rape of 30 women and 6 girls. Nineteen of the 36 victims, including the 6 minors, belong to the Twa community, while 3 Luba women perceived as supporting the Twa community were raped by Luba men. The remaining 14 women, all internally displaced persons from the Luba community, were all reportedly raped by men from the Twa community during attacks in November 2016 and January 2017.

D. Humanitarian and economic situation

35. The humanitarian situation deteriorated owing to intensifying intercommunal violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. A total of 2.2 million persons had been forcibly displaced as at 31 December 2016. In Tanganyika, the spread of violence in several areas of the province forced some 102,000 people into new displacement in the final quarter of 2016, including an estimated 46,000 people into neighbouring Haut-Lomami and Haut-Katanga provinces. Similarly, in Kasai Central and Kasai Oriental provinces, clashes between FARDC and local militia displaced more than 225,000 people by the end of January 2017. As at 31 December 2016, there were 451,956 refugees and asylum seekers in the country, mostly from Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda and South Sudan. By early January 2017, UNHCR had registered 28,000 South Sudanese refugees, with the majority settled close to the border with South Sudan in the territories of Dungu and Faradje, in Haut-Uélé.

36. Humanitarian access continued to be obstructed by insecurity in some areas in the eastern provinces. Funding for humanitarian aid failed to keep pace with growing humanitarian need. The Humanitarian Response Plan was funded at a little more than 60 per cent ($412 million of $690 million) at the end of 2016. On 10 February 2017, the humanitarian community and Congolese authorities launched an appeal for $748 million to assist 6.7 million people in need for 2017.

37. The downward macroeconomic trend, due to a large extent to the decline in global commodity prices, continued. The Congolese franc has depreciated by more than 30 per cent since January 2016, despite efforts by the Central Bank to curb inflation. On 13 January 2017, the Central Bank doubled its prime rate from 7 to 14 per cent, and on 24 January it injected $50 million into the interbank exchange market in an effort to support the Congolese franc. The deteriorating socioeconomic situation risks fuelling popular frustration in an already tense political environment.

III. Proposed adjustment of MONUSCO and implementation of key reporting obligations

38. The political agreement of 31 December 2016 provides a clear path towards the holding of elections and offers the best chance of a peaceful transfer of power,

which would set the stage for the eventual drawdown and exit of MONUSCO. The Mission's main strategic objective during the next 12 to 18 months, therefore, will be to help create an environment conducive to the timely holding of peaceful, inclusive and credible elections in accordance with the provisions of the political agreement. The achievement of that objective will depend on the political will of the signatories. The Mission is adjusting its priorities, posture and presence to ensure that it is well positioned to use the full range of tools at its disposal to support the political and electoral process, contribute to the protection of civilians, reduce the threat posed by armed groups and assist with stabilization efforts.

Political and electoral process

39. Swift implementation of the political agreement, beginning with the finalization of the special provisions, remains critical in order to maintain the momentum towards elections and prevent a further deterioration of the security and human rights situation in the country. MONUSCO will, in particular, support that process through the sustained good offices, political facilitation and engagement of my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo with all national stakeholders, as well as regional and international partners. MONUSCO is also ready to support the work of CNSA, as requested, in order to help ensure that that key body is able to fully exercise its critical role in overseeing the implementation of the political agreement. That is fundamental to achieving the overarching strategic objective. Alongside those efforts, MONUSCO will continue to provide technical and logistical support to the Independent National Electoral Commission to conclude the updating of the voter registry and, if mandated by the Security Council, support the organization and conduct of the elections.

Civilian staffing

40. MONUSCO is recalibrating its civilian staffing to ensure that it is well positioned to support its main strategic objective during the transition period and the upcoming elections. To that end, civilian staff members in key leadership and management roles are being moved from Goma to reinforce MONUSCO headquarters in Kinshasa, which will enable Mission leadership to increase engagement with the host country authorities.

Human rights

41. As part of its efforts to create an environment conducive to the holding of peaceful, inclusive and credible elections, MONUSCO will maintain a strong focus on the promotion of human rights, the preservation of political space and the promotion of confidence-building measures. Rigorous human rights monitoring, reporting, investigation and advocacy will be a critical part of the Mission's efforts to reduce political violence during the transition period and the upcoming elections. The Mission will intensify its engagement with national authorities at all levels, security actors and all relevant stakeholders to urge respect for fundamental political freedoms. It will also work closely with the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel et de la communication to contribute to the promotion and respect for freedom of the press. MONUSCO will make use of its prosecution support cells to help Congolese authorities ensure that perpetrators of serious human rights violations are held accountable.

Protection of civilians

42. MONUSCO will continue to pursue a comprehensive approach to the protection of civilians that emphasizes the use of its good offices and political facilitation at the local, provincial and national levels, as well as human rights

monitoring and reporting to prevent and de-escalate intercommunal conflicts, which are likely to become increasingly politicized in the run-up to the elections. To that end, the Mission is taking steps to strengthen its information collection and analysis in order to address the root causes of conflict through a better understanding of the linkages between local and national political dynamics, connections between armed groups, weapons flows and criminal networks. The Mission is also enhancing its analytical and early warning capacities in key hotspots, including through the strengthening of its information architecture and community alert networks.

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo force

43. The MONUSCO force continues to adopt a more flexible, mobile and agile posture in support of the Mission's main strategic objective, which would enable it to concentrate its forces where they are most needed to protect civilians under threat of physical violence. Enhanced capabilities, including intelligence assets and specialized infantry, used in conjunction with the Mission's existing analytical mechanisms and aviation assets, would allow MONUSCO to better address the rapidly increasing range of challenges during the upcoming period. Adjustments to the force would be done within existing resources by replacing existing units with more specialized capabilities, assuming they can be generated in a timely fashion. Those adjustments will not result in any increase in personnel.

44. Adjusting the MONUSCO force to be more flexible, mobile and agile will also require commensurate efforts to remove any caveats limiting the use of the force in different areas, including the rapidly deployable battalions. The force will also enhance accountability through more robust monitoring of performance, as requested by the Security Council. In addition, adjustments will be made to the force's sector boundaries in order to respond to new and evolving threats.

45. MONUSCO continued to undertake efforts to transform the force, namely through the deployment of rapidly deployable battalions, which are essential to support greater mobility. The deployment of one company-sized reinforcement of such a battalion into the Katanga Sector from December 2016 to 20 January 2017 was a key component of the Mission's response to the escalating violence in that area. The second such battalion is due to arrive in the Mission area in April 2017.

Police component

46. MONUSCO has seven formed police units currently deployed in Beni, Bukaku, Bunia, Goma and Kinshasa, which will continue to conduct frequent patrolling to prevent and deter human rights violations, facilitate deployment and monitoring by human rights and police teams, and intervene rapidly when necessary. In the light of the increasing threat of violence related to the elections and the political situation, two additional formed police units would be required for Lubumbashi and Kananga, which are likely to be electoral hotspots and currently lack a formed police unit presence. Such rapid intervention capabilities in those key urban areas would enhance the Mission's capacity to protect civilians, as well as United Nations personnel and premises, in the case of an outbreak of election-related violence. An additional 36 armoured personnel carriers would be required to enhance the mobility of existing and new formed police units.

Support to national security agencies

47. The Mission will also deepen its engagement with the national security forces to promote a secure environment in which all citizens peacefully participate in the democratic process. Support to the national security forces, whether related to

capacity-building or operations, will be provided in strict compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy, with an emphasis on the potential impact of the Mission's support in terms of respect for political rights and freedoms. MONUSCO police, with the support of the Human Rights Division, will continue to support the national police, in particular, through training on human rights and public order management, while closely monitoring their conduct and operations. The Mission plans to enhance direct tactical cooperation with FARDC in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, including through combat liaison support teams.

Stabilization

48. MONUSCO will focus its stabilization efforts on ensuring that the gains made to date are preserved and can be built on after the elections in the context of the Mission's exit strategy. Specifically, the Mission will use its good offices to support key stabilization efforts, including key reforms to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, engage with the United Nations country team and bilateral donors to address the impact of the deteriorating socioeconomic situation and maintain its support to area-based approaches to stabilization in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, including by providing coordination for and support to the multi-donor International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy and efforts to reduce community violence.

Presence

49. The Mission is developing plans to strengthen its civilian, police, and/or force presence by shifting resources to a limited number of locations, including Beni and Kananga, where high tensions are expected to continue throughout the transition period, or where its presence is currently limited or non-existent. Since MONUSCO cannot establish a sufficient presence in all high-risk areas at once within its existing resources, efforts to improve the Mission's ability to respond quickly to emerging threats, with a focus on prevention and mitigation, will continue.

50. Given the Mission's limited presence in most of the country, the ability to quickly move civilian and military personnel to trouble spots, as they emerge, will be critical throughout the transition period, including for the transformation of the force. As demonstrated by the Mission's recent experience in the Kasai provinces, mobile monitoring and response teams, which are specifically designed to deploy rapidly to areas of potential or emerging violence with little or no MONUSCO presence, have proven valuable in providing the Mission with situational awareness and analysis, as well as a means of monitoring and reporting on human rights violations in areas where the Mission is not present. The teams also help guide the Mission's engagement with provincial and national authorities to de-escalate tensions and address the root causes of violence. Mobility and flexibility will remain critical.

IV. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

51. Some 75 security- and safety-related incidents affecting United Nations personnel were reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the period under review. Those included 38 criminal incidents targeting mainly national staff, 7 cases linked to civil unrest, 26 hazards-related cases and 4 incidents related to armed conflict. MONUSCO has made the assessment that its support to FARDC-led operations against armed groups and the volatile transition context may lead to threats to United Nations personnel and installations, and has reviewed its

operations and procedures and taken relevant risk mitigating measures to address changes in the security situation.

V. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

52. MONUSCO continued to vigorously enforce my policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse among all personnel, resulting in a reduction from six incidents to two, compared with the previous reporting period. The Mission continued to take preventive action, such as conducting training and awareness-raising activities and risk assessment and monitoring visits, establishing community-based complaint networks, conducting regular deterrent patrols by MONUSCO formed police units and military police and implementing out-of-bound areas and curfew regimes. The community-based complaint networks implemented over the past six months have proven effective, with no new allegations received by the networks in their areas of operation. MONUSCO, in coordination with other United Nations entities, provided assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. Moreover, the Mission continued to encourage more engagement of relevant national authorities in prevention efforts and sustainable victim support.

VI. Financial aspects

53. The General Assembly, in its resolution 70/274, appropriated the amount of $1,235.7 million for the maintenance of MONUSCO for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. My proposed budget in the amount of $1,234.6 million for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 has been submitted to the Assembly for its consideration during the second part of its resumed seventy-first session. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of MONUSCO beyond 31 March 2017, the cost for maintaining the Mission would be limited to the amounts approved by the Assembly.

VII. Observations and recommendations

54. The Democratic Republic of the Congo once again finds itself at a crossroads. I commend the spirit of compromise demonstrated by Congolese stakeholders from across the political spectrum and the mediation efforts of CENCO, which resulted in the signing of the political agreement of 31 December 2016. The political agreement offers a viable path towards the holding of peaceful, credible and inclusive elections, which will allow the country to move forward towards a more stable future where peacekeepers are no longer required. Significant political, logistical and financial obstacles will need to be overcome to attain that goal. I therefore call upon all concerned Congolese stakeholders to work in the same spirit of collaboration and good faith, and with the same sense of responsibility, towards the establishment of the special provisions and the speedy implementation of the transitional arrangements, starting with the appointment of the Prime Minister and the establishment of CNSA. Further delays will only serve to inflame tensions and fuel the violence that is now spreading across the country.

55. The enthusiasm generated by the political agreement of 31 December has given way to brinkmanship and manipulations by Congolese stakeholders from across the political spectrum. The most pressing task now for the United Nations, working closely with its key regional and international partners, is to support the establishment of the transitional arrangements envisaged in the political agreement and help create an environment conducive to the holding of peaceful, credible and

inclusive elections and a peaceful transfer of power in the shortest possible time frame. The coming months will be critical in that regard. Every effort must, therefore, be made at the national, regional and international levels to keep the process moving forward, as called for in the joint statement of the United Nations, African Union, European Union and International Organization of la Francophonie issued on 16 February 2017. I therefore call upon the Security Council to put its full weight behind the political agreement and the efforts of MONUSCO to support its swift implementation. To that end, my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo will continue to exercise his good offices to support the political transition, including the establishment and smooth functioning of the transitional institutions, the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the preservation of political space.

56. I would also encourage the Security Council to ensure that MONUSCO is mandated and appropriately resourced to support the electoral cycle, beyond the completion of the revision of the voter registry, through the provision of logistical and technical support to the other phases of the electoral process that must be completed to ensure the timely holding of credible presidential, national and provincial legislative elections. Such support would certainly entail a degree of risk. However, with the signing of the political agreement of 31 December, the placing of stringent conditions on the Mission's ability to act would contribute to prolonging the current political uncertainty and creating further delays in the implementation of the political agreement and the electoral process.

57. There will be many challenges in the transition period ahead. I am concerned by the slow pace of negotiations on the implementation modalities of the political agreement of 31 December and the rapidly deteriorating security situation across the country, which is exacerbated by the prevailing political uncertainty. Insecurity is no longer limited to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where violence and threats to civilians by armed groups persist and where the majority of MONUSCO forces are deployed. It has spread to other areas, such as the three Kasai provinces, Kongo Central and Tanganyika, where intercommunal violence and challenges to State authority are mounting. Major urban areas are also at risk of increasing violence in the electoral context. The Mission has done its utmost to adapt to that new environment, within existing resources, but will be hard-pressed to satisfactorily fulfil its mandate across the country if current trends continue.

58. The current political and security challenges facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo require a political solution, backed, where necessary, by a credible and effective security response. The primary responsibility for that rests with the national authorities, and MONUSCO will continue working with them to address specific threats to the civilian population within its existing mandate and resources and in strict compliance with its human rights due diligence policy.

59. I intend to ensure that MONUSCO fulfils its mandate to protect civilians by, inter alia, improving the performance of its military and police components. All MONUSCO troops must be ready and willing to use force against armed groups that pose a threat to the civilian population, and to do so pre-emptively. The conduct of targeted offensive operations to neutralize armed groups should remain the priority task of the force Intervention Brigade units; however, the framework brigades must contribute actively in a supporting role to the neutralization of armed groups. I count on the support and cooperation of troop- and police-contributing countries to do their utmost to preserve the effectiveness and credibility of MONUSCO, and will continue to engage them in that regard. I will also report to the Security Council, as requested, on any cases of non-performance.

60. Enhanced mobility, flexibility and agility of MONUSCO troops will be even more necessary to effectively support the realization of the Mission's political strategy, particularly during the upcoming period. I am therefore exploring the possible deployment of additional specialized capabilities, including intelligence assets and specialized infantry, which would be accomplished by reducing other MONUSCO troops, resulting in no increase in the number of troops on the ground.

61. Priority will also continue to be given to deterrence and prevention in dealing with election-related violence. I would therefore encourage the Security Council to consider authorizing the deployment of two additional formed police units and associated enablers to increase the readiness of MONUSCO to protect civilians, monitor the human rights situation and assist national authorities in public order management, especially in Kananga and Lubumbashi, where there is a high risk of urban violence in the upcoming electoral period. The need for those additional formed police units would be reviewed as soon as the elections are concluded with a view to phasing them out.

62. I am deeply disturbed by the sharp increase in human rights violations, including the continued shrinking of political space. I urge the Congolese authorities to take appropriate measures to hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable. I also call for timely and credible investigations into the serious violations committed during the September and December 2016 events in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which led to the killing of some 100 civilians mainly by the national security forces. I urge the Government to swiftly investigate allegations of human rights violations in the context of clashes between the national security forces and Kamuina Nsapu militia forces in the Kasai provinces. I welcome the release of some prisoners who had links with or were close to political parties and the reopening of some media outlets affiliated with the opposition, which are important confidence-building measures to support the political transition. I encourage the Congolese authorities to pursue further confidence-building measures and uphold the free exercise of political and civil rights.

63. I am deeply concerned by recent reports of cross-border movements of former M23 elements, and the negative impact of the conflict in South Sudan and the situation in Burundi on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also remain concerned that many of the commitments in the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework remain outstanding. I call upon all signatories of the Framework to redouble their efforts to reinvigorate its implementation and to realize the commitments made. I also encourage key regional leaders to remain engaged in efforts to keep the political process moving forward. I welcome the establishment of the joint technical committee between MONUSCO and the Government focusing on options for the relocation of the SPLM/A-IO elements and encourage the Government to continue its engagement with national and regional stakeholders to identify a sustainable solution to that particular issue.

64. The year 2017 will be crucial for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The presence of MONUSCO in the country therefore remains essential to help keep the political process on track, preserve the gains made and shore up the prospects for stability in the country. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of MONUSCO for a period of one year, until 31 March 2018, taking into account the recommendations regarding MONUSCO support to the electoral process and adjustments to the force, and increase the authorized ceiling for the police component from 1,050 to 1,370 personnel. In the meantime, MONUSCO will continue to make adjustments to its priorities, posture and presence, as outlined in paragraphs 38 to 50 of the present report.

65. I would like to thank my Special Representative, Maman Sidikou, and all the women and men of MONUSCO and the United Nations country team for their service, often under difficult conditions. Their determination and dedication have been instrumental in helping to stabilize the security situation and consolidate the gains achieved thus far. My appreciation also goes to troop- and police-contributing countries and to the donors, the regional and multilateral organizations and the non-governmental organizations that have continued to provide invaluable support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Map No. 4412 Rev. 23 UNITED NATIONS
February 2017 (Colour)

Department of Field Support
Geospatial Information Section (formerly Cartographic Section)

United Nations S/2017/207

Security Council

Distr.: General
15 March 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 10 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you the following:

In recent days, Turkish regime forces have continued their treacherous attacks against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, in shameless violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of good-neighbourliness. Those attacks are also in flagrant violation of Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions.

Blind Turkish policies have resulted in more and more attacks by the Turkish army on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic and the murder of more and more Syrian civilians. On Thursday, 9 March 2017, Turkish regime forces stationed illegally on Syrian territory directed artillery fire and rockets at positions belonging to the Syrian Arab Army and its allies in parts of the city of Manbij in the Aleppo governorate countryside. The Turkish bombardment of Border Guard posts at Buwayhij, Bughaz, Amyanah and Hill 543 resulted in a number of dead and injured.

The Syrian Arab Republic holds the Turkish regime responsible for supporting the terrorism that has killed tens of thousands of its innocent citizens and destroyed Syrian infrastructure on direct orders from that regime's President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, whose security apparatus has supplied the terrorist organizations with all the weapons, financing, safe havens and hospitals that they need. The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its demand for the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the members of the Security Council to put a stop to attacks by the Turkish army, the Erdoğan regime and the Justice and Development Party. The only explanation for those attacks is that they are an attempt to halt the progress achieved by Syrian Arab Army and its allies in dislodging the terrorist organizations and associated groups, and restoring security and stability to the Aleppo countryside and the rest of Syrian territory. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also calls on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Security Council and the international community to compel Turkey to immediately withdraw its forces, which have invaded the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic in violation of international law. It is incumbent upon the Security Council to put a stop to the Turkish attacks for the sake of maintaining security and stability in the region and the world.

Any attempt to cover up these shameful attacks against Syrian sovereignty and territorial integrity, both of which are emphasized in all the Security Council

resolutions on Syria, will only keep the situation explosive and keep fires burning in the region. That would ultimately serve only the terrorist groups and their backers, which include Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and others.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations S/2017/208

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 March 2017

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2277 (2016), in which the Council requested me to report on the implementation of the commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region.[1] It covers developments since the issuance of my report of 4 October 2016 (S/2016/840) and provides information on peace and security developments in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region until 28 February 2017.

II. Major developments

A. Security situation

2. During the reporting period, the activities of illegal armed groups, including the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI), Mai-Mai groups and the Lord's Resistance Army, combined with inter-ethnic tensions in several parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have continued to threaten security and stability. In response, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) have continued operations against FDLR, ADF and FRPI, as detailed in my reports on MONUSCO of 29 December 2016 (S/2016/1130) and of 10 March 2017 (S/2017/206).

[1] In this context, the region includes the 13 signatories of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, namely, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, the Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. In addition, the following four intergovernmental organizations act as witnesses/guarantors of the Framework: the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development Community and the United Nations.

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3. The reporting period witnessed the resumption of clashes between FARDC and elements of the former Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) in North Kivu, in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the first since the signing of the Nairobi Declarations in December 2013. Following reports of the disappearance on 11 November 2016 of Sultani Makenga, the military leader of the former M23, from his residence in Kampala, the Minister for Defence of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Crispin Atama Tabe, requested the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to investigate reports that approximately 180 former members of M23 had left their cantonment in Bihanga, Uganda, and infiltrated Rutshuru territory in North Kivu province.

4. On 19 January 2017, the Government of Uganda issued a statement noting that it had arrested 101 former members of M23 headed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the statement, the Government acknowledged that some 40 combatants had escaped from the Bihanga camp earlier, reaffirmed its commitment to the Nairobi Declarations and stressed that Uganda would not support any activity intended to destabilize the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

5. On 27 January, two FARDC helicopters crashed in two separate incidents in Rutshuru, as FARDC reportedly battled former M23 combatants in the vicinity. On 29 January, the Rwanda Defence Force indicated that a group claiming to belong to the former M23 and reportedly fleeing combat with FARDC had crossed into Rwanda. Reports indicate that the Rwandan authorities handed the individuals over to the International Committee of the Red Cross for appropriate action under international law.

6. On 22 February, a spokesperson for FARDC indicated that Congolese armed forces had exchanged fire with ex-M23 combatants over a period of two days, near Rutshuru, North Kivu, killing at least 16 rebels. The following day, a spokesperson for the Uganda People's Defence Forces announced that 44 ex-M23 combatants, who had fled to Uganda following clashes with FARDC, had been apprehended and were being held in a military camp in Kisoro, western Uganda.

7. The arrival of elements of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 2016, fleeing conflict in South Sudan, remains a matter of concern and could exacerbate tensions in fragile local communities that have long been traumatized by the activities of armed groups. Furthermore, the development could negatively affect relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. Congolese authorities have called upon MONUSCO to remove SPLM/A-IO elements on its premises from Congolese territory as soon as possible.

8. In a separate development, on 21 December 2016, clashes occurred between FARDC and the Burundi National Defence Force in Uvira, South Kivu province, killing at least five Burundian soldiers. The latter had reportedly crossed the border in pursuit of armed elements from the Forces nationales de libération (FNL). The incident followed efforts by the Burundi National Defence Force to neutralize Burundian rebels operating along the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

9. In Burundi, while the overall security situation has somewhat improved, violence continued with the assassination attempt on Presidential Adviser Willy

Nyamitwe, on 28 November 2016, and the killing of the Minister for Environment, Emmanuel Niyonkuru, on 1 January 2017.

10. In Uganda, intercommunal tensions in the areas bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo escalated when security forces clashed with local militia in Kasese District, Rwenzori region, on 26 and 27 November 2016. The fighting occurred after suspected guards of the Rwenzori traditional leader, Charles Wesley Mumbere, accused by Ugandan authorities of leading a secessionist movement, reportedly attacked police and army patrols. At least 87 were reported killed and 149 arrested. Police detained Mr. Mumbere on 27 November 2016. He was subsequently granted bail on 6 February 2017.

B. Political developments

11. The region witnessed some positive developments during the reporting period. The Regional Oversight Mechanism held its seventh high-level meeting on 26 October 2016 in Luanda following a successful reform of the governance structures of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. Signatories and guarantors renewed their commitment to accelerate the full implementation of the Framework. The meeting also provided the opportunity for the leaders of Angola and the Congo to discuss the national dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with that country's President, Joseph Kabila.

12. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a political agreement, facilitated by the African Union, was signed on 18 October 2016. On 31 December, representatives of the ruling majority and the opposition platform known as the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales de la République démocratique du Congo acquises au changement reached another agreement, facilitated by the Conférence nationale épiscopale du Congo (CENCO). The agreements helped stabilize the country and chart a path towards the conduct of peaceful and credible elections by the end of 2017. More details are provided in section IV below and in my reports on MONUSCO of 29 December 2016 and of 10 March 2017, respectively.

13. In letters addressed to me and to the President of the Security Council dated 26 December 2016, Jean-Marie Runiga, leader of the former M23 faction in Rwanda, which is now registered as a political party named Alliance pour le salut du peuple, requested that the sanctions against him be lifted, and that his party be allowed to participate in the talks. On 28 December, Bertrand Bisimwa, leader of the former M23 elements in Uganda, requested that CENCO consider raising the repatriation of former M23 elements, the release of former M23 prisoners and the development of a road map for the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations during the talks.

14. The inter-Burundian dialogue, facilitated by the East African Community, has yet to produce a breakthrough. From 7 to 9 December 2016, the East African Community Facilitator, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania Benjamin Mkapa, visited Burundi to encourage the resumption of talks. In reaction to a statement by the Facilitator upon his departure from Bujumbura on 9 December, the main opposition coalition, the Conseil national pour le respect de l'Accord d'Arusha pour la paix et la réconciliation au Burundi et la restauration de l'état de

droit (CNARED), stated that it no longer recognized the Facilitator and urged the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, who serves as the East African Community Mediator, to consult with the East African Community Heads of State and designate another Facilitator. Several civil society entities also accused the Facilitator of bias towards the regime.

15. From 16 to 19 February 2017, Mr. Mkapa convened another consultative session with the parties in Arusha in the United Republic of Tanzania. While the Government of Burundi was not represented, a delegation of the ruling Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD-FDD) party joined the discussion. Representatives of CNARED, led by Jean Minani, also travelled to Arusha to meet with the Facilitator. Large demonstrations took place in Bujumbura, Gitega and other parts of Burundi to denounce the consultations, especially the participation of so-called "putschistes". While the session was under way, the Government of Burundi requested the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to arrest several dialogue participants. In his concluding statement on 19 February, Mr. Mkapa called upon the East African Community to convene an extraordinary summit on Burundi to discuss the impediment to the process. Further details on the situation in Burundi are provided in section IV below and in my report on Burundi of 23 February 2017 (S/2017/165).

16. Preparations for elections progressed in Angola, Kenya and Rwanda, all three set for August 2017. In December 2016, the President of Angola, José Eduardo dos Santos, announced his intention to step down before the elections. Subsequently, the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola elected the Minister for Defence, retired General João Lourenço, as its lead candidate. General elections in Kenya to select the president, senators, county governors and members of the National Assembly and the County Assemblies, as well as women county representatives, are scheduled for 8 August. The President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, will be seeking a third term on 4 August against three declared contenders: founder and chair of the Democratic Green Party of Rwanda Frank Habineza, and Philippe Mpayimana and Thomas Nahimana.

C. Humanitarian situation

17. As noted in my previous report (S/2016/840), the humanitarian situation in the region remains challenging, with more than 6 million internally displaced persons and 3.5 million refugees. Together, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania account for 4.41 million internally displaced persons and 2.8 million refugees as a result of conflicts in the region.

18. The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remained of concern, particularly in the eastern provinces, but also increasingly in south-eastern Tanganyika and central Kasai provinces, where activities by armed groups and rising intercommunal tensions contributed to accelerated displacement, bringing the number of internally displaced persons countrywide to a staggering 2.1 million at the end of 2016. The eastern part of the country is also home to the vast majority of refugees from neighbouring countries, totalling 451,000 people, mainly from

Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda and South Sudan. The multi-year Humanitarian Response Plan for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which covers the period from 2017 to 2019, foresees a deteriorating humanitarian situation and intends to aid 6.7 million people in 2017, up from 6 million in 2016.

19. Large-scale displacement continued in South Sudan. Some 761,550 refugees fled the country in 2016 alone, of a total of 1.4 million registered refugees. Another 1.9 million people are internally displaced in South Sudan.

20. At the end of 2016, Uganda became the largest host of refugees in Africa, providing asylum to 736,953 South Sudanese refugees, among others, as at 10 February 2017. That puts the Ugandan authorities and the United Nations humanitarian agencies and their partners under increasing pressure to accommodate the needs of both the refugee and host communities and defuse possible tensions.

21. In Burundi, political instability and insecurity generated significant displacement. In total, nearly 387,000 refugees have fled the country since April 2015, primarily to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, while some 170,000 people are internally displaced. In 2016, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance increased from 1.1 million to at least 3 million, including a four-fold increase in the number of food-insecure people, from 730,000 to 3 million, due to the rising prices of basic food items, seasonal rain deficit during the agriculture season and chronic poverty. In 2017, the humanitarian community will appeal for $73.7 million to assist approximately 1 million Burundians.

22. On 31 January 2017, at the border crossing in Uvira, South Kivu province, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo handed 124 Burundian nationals over to the Burundian authorities. All deportees were detained upon arrival in Burundi and charged with endangering State security. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund were granted access to their places of detention.

D. Human rights and judicial cooperation

23. Violations of international humanitarian and human rights law continued in the region throughout the reporting period. Restrictions on the basic rights to free expression and association, among others, were reported in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. Civilians in South Sudan continued to suffer serious abuses committed by both government forces and opposition fighters. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, political violence and government repression intensified, as detailed in my report on MONUSCO of 29 December 2016.

24. Major incidents were recorded in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2016 in the context of election-related human rights violations. MONUSCO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that, between 15 and 31 December 2016 in Kinshasa, in the context of events surrounding the end of President Kabila's second and last constitutional mandate, 40 people, including 5 women and 2 children, were killed, and 147, including 14 women and 18 children, were injured owing to the

disproportionate use of force and the use of live ammunition by defence and security forces. Hundreds of arrests were also reported throughout the country during those events. The actual number of victims may be much higher, as human rights investigators were denied access to many detention centres, hospitals and morgues, and were therefore unable to properly assess the total number of victims.

25. The report published by MONUSCO and OHCHR on those incidents states that repression by Congolese defence and security forces was executed through illegal restrictions on public freedoms, including the rights to freedom of expression, information and peaceful assembly. Those restrictions are in contravention of both international human rights standards and the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

26. In Burundi, national authorities suspended cooperation with OHCHR following the publication in October 2016 of the report of the independent investigation on Burundi carried out pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-24/1 (A/HRC/33/37). The report found that gross human rights violations were committed primarily by State actors and those linked to them. During the same month, the President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, signed legislation related to the country's withdrawal from the International Criminal Court. Serious human rights violations and abuses continued to be reported, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, forced disappearances and cases of torture and ill-treatment. Most violations were perpetrated by national security forces and the Imbonerakure, the ruling party's youth militia, who are reportedly increasingly acting as law enforcement agents. Unlawful practices by the Imbonerakure include illegally arresting citizens and handing them over to the police, as well as conducting joint operations with local authorities and, sometimes, the police.

27. Meanwhile, democratic space remained very limited in Burundi, where civil society organizations continued to suffer repression. Between 19 and 21 December, the Government of Burundi passed three ministerial ordinances to ban or suspend at least 11 non-governmental organizations, including Ligue ITEKA, one of the oldest and most respected human rights organizations in the country. Further restrictions were implemented on 23 December, when the National Assembly adopted legislation requiring civil society organizations operating in Burundi, including those based or funded from abroad, to deposit one third of their operating budget into the central bank of Burundi, pay all their employees in Burundian francs and respect set ethnic quotas when hiring Burundian nationals. The law was adopted by the Senate and promulgated by the President in January 2017.

28. In a positive development, the trial of Dominic Ongwen for crimes against humanity and war crimes, committed as a prominent member of the Lord's Resistance Army, commenced at the International Criminal Court on 6 December 2016.

E. Regional economic developments

29. The countries of the region continued their efforts to strengthen regional economic and financial cooperation. On 20 October 2016, the Ministers in charge of trade from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, both members of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), launched the

COMESA Simplified Trade Regime and signed a memorandum of understanding for the promotion of cross-border trade between the two countries. The Simplified Trade Regime aims to facilitate cross-border trade, eliminate non-tariff barriers and address commercial and customs fraud. Furthermore, 2 new one-stop border posts were set up along the border between Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, bringing the total number of operational one-stop border posts in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania to 10.

III. Implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework

A. Commitments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

30. Further information on the implementation of the national commitments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is contained in my reports on MONUSCO of 29 December 2016 and of 10 March 2017.

B. Commitments of the region

31. During the reporting period, signatory States continued to implement their commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, with mixed results. In that regard, following the decisions of the sixth Ordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of ICGLR, held in Luanda on 14 June 2016, Ministers for Defence and representatives from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania met in Kinshasa on 13 October and adopted the concept of operations and the budget for the Joint Follow-up Mechanism established to address the growing threat posed by ADF. On 18 February 2017, the Joint Follow-up Mechanism, staffed by military intelligence officers from the four participating countries, was inaugurated in Kasese district, Uganda, at the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, progress in the repatriation of disarmed combatants, including those of FDLR and the former M23, remained limited.

32. The reporting period witnessed challenges in relations between some countries in the region. Tensions that developed between Burundi and Rwanda last year have not fully dissipated. Meanwhile, renewed friction emerged between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, against the backdrop of the incursion by former M23 elements into the Democratic Republic of the Congo in January 2017. The Democratic Republic of the Congo requested the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism to investigate the reported incursion and blamed Uganda for not upholding regional commitments in the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

C. International commitments

33. During the reporting period, my Special Envoy continued his engagement with regional and international partners, with a view to promoting sustained and

concerted support to the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. In that regard, efforts continued towards the operationalization of the United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework 2016-2017, launched in New York on 21 March 2016. The United Nations Regional Development Group and the Office of my Special Envoy met in Kampala from 19 to 21 October to agree on the way forward regarding the implementation of the Regional Strategic Framework. The main outcomes included agreement on the establishment of a Great Lakes cross-border trust fund and the adoption of a resource mobilization strategy. Participants also agreed on priorities for each of the six pillars of the Regional Strategic Framework, including the promotion of cross-border private sector initiatives, the facilitation of labour mobility and the enhancement of women's participation in decision-making, among other things.

34. In Paris, on 8 December 2016, my Special Envoy attended a meeting of the International Contact Group for the Great Lakes region, which discussed regional developments and the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. Representatives of Angola, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America attended the meeting, alongside those of the European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie. They discussed coordinated international support to ongoing dialogue processes and initiatives to address the root causes of conflict in the region.

IV. Activities of my Special Envoy

A. Reform of the oversight mechanisms of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework

35. On 7 and 15 October 2016, the Technical Support Committee of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, co-chaired by my Special Envoy and the African Union Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, held its fourteenth and fifteenth sessions in Nairobi. The purpose was to prepare for a meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of signatory States, in prelude to the seventh high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Framework.

36. The Technical Support Committee adopted a status report on the implementation of national, regional and international commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. The report recommended faster progress with regard to, inter alia, the repatriation of disarmed combatants and the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations. On 24 October, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs endorsed the status report and recommended it for consideration by the Regional Oversight Mechanism.

37. On 26 October, the Regional Oversight Mechanism convened in Luanda at its first meeting hosted by a signatory State, in line with a recommendation adopted on 29 September 2015. Chaired by the President of Angola, who also serves as the Chair of ICGLR, the well-attended meeting helped enhance regional ownership and strengthen the signatory States' commitment to the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

38. While welcoming the progress achieved, the Regional Oversight Mechanism took note of challenges and outstanding issues and directed the Technical Support Committee to submit an updated list of priorities, drawing on the Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. The Regional Oversight Mechanism also welcomed ongoing cooperation between FARDC and MONUSCO against FDLR and ADF, as well as the establishment of the Joint Follow-up Mechanism to address the growing threat from ADF. It also expressed appreciation for the initiatives taken by the guarantors of the Framework to tackle illegal armed groups, and endorsed the recommendations of the meeting of Ministers for Defence of ICGLR and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), held in Nairobi on 20 July 2016. The Regional Oversight Mechanism highlighted the need for faster progress with the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation and resettlement of disarmed combatants present in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring countries, notably former FDLR and M23 combatants.

39. Developments in Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan were also on the agenda of the meeting. The Regional Oversight Mechanism called upon all Burundians to commit to inclusive dialogue and extend full cooperation to the East African Community Facilitator. The meeting further urged the governments of the region, supported by the African Union and the United Nations, to assist in finding durable solutions for the SPLM/A-IO combatants present in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Participants also encouraged the parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to seek peaceful solutions to the political crisis, in line with the country's Constitution and Security Council resolution 2277 (2016). In the margins of the meeting, the Presidents of Angola and the Congo encouraged the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to take steps to broaden support for the political agreement of 18 October 2016. In a related development, the President of the Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, offered to host the eighth high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism on 20 October 2017 in the Congo.

40. On 25 January 2017, my Special Envoy hosted the third meeting of the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework in Addis Ababa in order to take stock of regional initiatives to neutralize negative forces and encourage ongoing dialogue processes in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Among other things, the guarantors urged the Chiefs of Defence Staff of ICGLR and SADC member States to carry out a field mission to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, as recommended by the meeting of the Ministers for Defence of ICGLR and SADC held in Nairobi on 20 July 2016. Furthermore, they called upon the Chiefs of Defence Staff to develop recommendations to facilitate the neutralization of negative forces in the region. The guarantors further encouraged the resumption of joint consultations between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and representatives of the former M23 regarding the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations. They also undertook to assist with efforts to relocate the elements of SPLM/A-IO present in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

41. The guarantors welcomed the signing of a political agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 31 December 2016. They urged the parties to continue to cooperate with CENCO to expedite discussions on the implementation

of the agreement. With regard to the situation in Burundi, they called upon all parties to renounce violence and collaborate with the East African Community Facilitator to accelerate the conclusion of the dialogue.

42. As decided at the seventh high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism, the Technical Support Committee held its sixteenth session on 9 and 10 February 2017 in Nairobi. The Committee, inter alia, considered a draft updated list of priorities for the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. It also examined a proposal for the establishment of a regional task force on the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation and resettlement of disarmed combatants and stressed the urgency of strengthening existing mechanisms. The Committee undertook the initiation of preparations for thematic meetings, at expert and ministerial levels, in the areas of natural resource management, displacement and youth.

B. Good offices of my Special Envoy

43. During the reporting period, my Special Envoy continued his good offices, in close coordination with national, regional and international partners, in support of the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. As outlined below, he took some initiatives to help address outstanding issues related to the neutralization of negative forces and the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations. He also continued his support to dialogue processes, as well as activities to promote women, youth and civil society. In addition, he continued to promote durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons, in close consultation with relevant United Nations entities in the region. Furthermore, my Special Envoy continued to facilitate the administration of justice through judicial cooperation and to support regional economic cooperation.

Implementation of the Nairobi Declarations

44. During a working session on 23 November 2016, my Special Envoy and the new Coordinator of the Congolese National Oversight Mechanism discussed ways to accelerate the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations, notably the repatriation of former M23 combatants still in Rwanda and Uganda. They reviewed the recommendations from two joint evaluation meetings between representatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and a delegation of the former M23, held in Kinshasa on 27 and 28 May and on 27 and 28 June 2016, respectively.

45. Following the incursion of former M23 combatants into the Democratic Republic of the Congo in January 2017, the Coordinator of the National Oversight Mechanism wrote to the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework to request their urgent assistance. Consequently, my Special Envoy and my Special Representative and Head of MONUSCO met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Léonard She Okitundu, and the Coordinator of the National Oversight Mechanism on 22 and 23 January. The two officials echoed the need to resume joint consultations between the Government and the former M23 leadership. My Special Envoy and Special Representative also met with the Vice-President of CENCO, Fridolin Ambongo

Besungu, and encouraged CENCO to include relevant concerns raised by the former M23 in the ongoing political dialogue.

46. My Special Envoy and Special Representative also met with the President of Uganda in Entebbe, Uganda, on 24 January 2017. The President deplored the continuing presence and activities of negative forces in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He agreed to meet with the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to discuss the issue of negative forces, the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations and the repatriation of former M23 elements still present in Uganda.

Regional consultations on Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition elements present in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

47. Following a request by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to MONUSCO regarding the relocation of SPLM/A-IO elements out of the country, my Special Envoy and Special Representative undertook consultations in Goma and Kinshasa from 12 to 14 January 2017. During a meeting with representatives of SPLM/A-IO at their cantonment site in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the members of that organization committed to renouncing fighting and requested that they be reunited with their relatives, who are being hosted as refugees in neighbouring countries. In Kinshasa, my Special Envoy and Special Representative met with the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Interior, as well as the Chief of Staff of the President. The officials reiterated their demand for the immediate relocation of the SPLM/A-IO elements out of their country.

48. During his aforementioned meeting with my Special Envoy and Special Representative on 24 January, the President of Uganda indicated his readiness to host those SPLM/A-IO combatants who wished to relocate to Uganda, subject to concurrence from the Government of South Sudan.

49. My Special Envoy and the Deputy Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo travelled to Juba and Addis Ababa from 5 to 8 February for consultations with senior officials of the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan and with representatives of the African Union. First Vice-President Taban Deng Gai and Minister for Foreign Affairs Deng Alor of South Sudan reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining neighbourly relations with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and agreed to engage the Congolese authorities on the voluntary repatriation of SPLM/A-IO elements on MONUSCO premises. They also expressed support to efforts to identify acceptable solutions that would not undermine peace and security in South Sudan. In Addis Ababa, the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smaïl Chergui, expressed his commitment to working closely with the United Nations in efforts to resolve the issue and offered the support of the Liaison Office in Kinshasa to MONUSCO in the matter.

Support to dialogue processes in the region

Burundi

50. My Special Envoy continued his good offices and advocacy in support of dialogue processes in the region, in line with Security Council resolutions 2211

(2015) and 2277 (2016). In Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, on 17 October 2016, he met with the Facilitator of the inter-Burundian dialogue, Mr. Mkapa, to inquire about the status of the talks and reiterate the support of the United Nations.

51. Mr. Mkapa briefed my Special Envoy on his efforts to bring the parties back to the negotiating table. He stressed that both the Government of Burundi and the opposition coalition in exile needed to display greater political will to enable the talks to move ahead, and called for stronger political engagement by the leaders of the region.

52. My Special Envoy encouraged the Facilitator to pursue his contacts with all parties and agreed that stronger involvement by regional leaders would help advance the dialogue. He stressed the importance for all international actors to rally behind the East African Community-led facilitation. While in Dar es Salaam, my Special Envoy also met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, Augustine Mahiga, and discussed the dialogue processes in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They agreed on the need for stronger cooperation between the United Nations and the region through the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

53. In Addis Ababa, on 24 and 29 January 2017, my Special Envoy met with Mr. Mahiga and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burundi, Alain Aimé Nyamitwe. He welcomed the reactivation of the inter-Burundian dialogue and encouraged the Government of Burundi to extend full cooperation to the East African Community. Mr. Mahiga stressed the need to call upon all parties to demonstrate flexibility and readiness for compromise.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

54. Following the meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism on 26 October 2016, and efforts by CENCO to broaden participation in the dialogue, my Special Envoy carried out several visits to Kinshasa in close consultation with my Special Representative.

55. My Special Envoy visited Kinshasa from 22 to 25 November and met with CENCO leaders, officials of the ruling presidential majority and opposition leaders of the political platform known as the Rassemblement, led by the late Étienne Tshisekedi. The Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Samy Badibanga, indicated that he would hold consultations on the formation of his government with all national stakeholders, including those who did not participate in the African Union-facilitated dialogue.

56. Representatives of the presidential majority reiterated that they were ready to accommodate the Rassemblement but stressed that some of the coalition's demands, notably a transition without the President and the holding of elections in 2017, were unacceptable. Representatives of the Rassemblement confirmed their support for the CENCO facilitation but asked that CENCO allow the parties to engage directly. They also denounced alleged arbitrary arrests and movement restrictions by security organs targeted at their members.

57. Following the signing of the political agreement of 31 December 2016, my Special Envoy returned to Kinshasa twice in 2017, first from 13 to 15 January, and

again on 23 January. On both occasions, together with my Special Representative, he consulted with Congolese stakeholders on the CENCO-led dialogue. My Special Envoy and Special Representative met with the CENCO President, Marcel Utembi Tapa, and Vice-President, Fridolin Ambongo Besungu. They also met with the Prime Minister and the Chief of Staff of the President. My Special Envoy also held separate meetings with the papal nuncio, Luis Mariano Montemayor, Félix Tshisekedi of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS) and Ève Bazaiba of the Movement pour la libération du Congo (MLC). In all those meetings, my Special Envoy and Special Representative welcomed the signing of the political agreement of 31 December, reiterated full support to CENCO and hoped for early agreement on the implementation details of the agreement, notably with regard to power-sharing.

58. At that point, CENCO leaders appeared encouraged by the signing of the political agreement of 31 December and by the progress made since then. They commended the important role that the international community, notably the United Nations, had played in bringing about the agreement. They encouraged the United Nations to pursue its engagement with all stakeholders and support the implementation of the agreement.

59. Similarly, all opposition representatives encouraged the United Nations to fully support efforts to resolve outstanding issues, including the implementation of the *mesures de décrispation* agreed to by the parties. Opposition leaders stressed that financial and logistical support would be critical, notably for the benefit of the Conseil national de suivi de l'accord (CNSA), mandated to monitor the implementation of the agreement, and the Independent National Electoral Commission.

60. The Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo stressed the need to reconcile the political agreements of 18 October and 31 December 2016. He insisted that those who assumed Government positions under the agreement of 18 October should be included in the implementation of the agreement of 31 December. The MLC representative contended that the agreement of 31 December had been prearranged by the Government and the Rassemblement, with no regard for the other opposition parties. Mr. Tshisekedi of UDPS insisted there was no room to renegotiate the position of Prime Minister; he elaborated that the Rassemblement had agreed to extend the term of the President during the transition in exchange for the positions of Prime Minister and Chair of CNSA.

61. On 23 January 2017, my Special Envoy and Special Representative met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and CENCO leaders. My Special Envoy also met with some opposition leaders and encouraged all parties to promptly finalize the talks on the implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016. During their second meeting with my Special Envoy on 23 January, CENCO leaders expressed frustration over the lack of progress in the ongoing talks on implementation. Nevertheless, they expected the parties to agree on the implementation details by 28 January. Regrettably, the agreement did not fully materialize, owing to persistent differences between the parties.

62. On 1 February, opposition leader Étienne Tshisekedi passed away in Belgium, where he had been evacuated for medical reasons. His sudden death cast uncertainty over the fate of the political dialogue. While the Government of the Democratic

Republic of the Congo promptly appointed a committee to organize a State funeral for Mr. Tshisekedi, discussions on the repatriation of his body and the holding of his funeral were still ongoing at the time of finalizing the present report.

63. Throughout the reporting period, my Special Envoy and Special Representative remained in close contact with key regional stakeholders, including senior officials of the African Union and ICGLR. My Special Envoy also met with the President of the Congo twice, in Brazzaville on 24 November 2016, and again in Addis Ababa on 29 January 2017.

64. From 7 to 9 November 2016, my Special Envoy visited Brussels for a series of meetings with European Union officials, including members of the Political and Security Committee of the European Union.

65. While in Brussels, he also met with Congolese opposition leader Moïse Katumbi and encouraged him to remain engaged in the peaceful resolution of the political crisis in his country. Mr. Katumbi assured my Special Envoy of his commitment to dialogue.

Private Sector Investment Conference for the Great Lakes Region

66. As a follow-up to the first Private Sector Investment Conference for the Great Lakes Region, held in Kinshasa on 24 and 25 February 2016, preparations for a second Conference continued during the reporting period. Rwanda offered to host the event in Gisenyi, a city located near its border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

67. On 2 February 2017, the Office of my Special Envoy, ICGLR, the United Nations country team in Rwanda and the Rwanda Development Board agreed on the composition of the steering committee mandated to oversee preparations for the second Conference. They also agreed that the Conference would focus on the promotion of cross-country business activities and on economic cooperation and integration among Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Partnerships

68. During the reporting period, the Office of my Special Envoy continued its collaboration with ICGLR, the African Union and SADC, the other guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. It also continued to enhance coordination among United Nations presences in the region and promote partnerships with other entities.

69. On 20 January 2017, my Special Envoy convened a meeting with the Resident Coordinators of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania and Regional Directors of relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Participants exchanged views on key political and security developments in the region, and agreed on coordinated actions in political engagements and programmatic interventions in order to effectively support the peace, security and development of the region.

70. On 16 and 17 February, the Office of my Special Envoy and the Government of Switzerland, in partnership with the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum,

convened a stakeholders meeting on the Great Lakes region, which gathered experts, representatives of governments and civil society of countries of the region and representatives of regional and international institutions. Participants reviewed peace and security developments in the region and identified priorities for future engagements, including options to foster synergies among various national, regional and international actors in order to achieve the objectives of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

71. On that occasion, my Special Envoy held a side meeting with other Special Envoys to exchange views on the situation in the region, including on the dialogue processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi and on the resumption of tensions related to the presence and activities of negative forces in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

72. My Special Envoy continued his cooperation with partners to advance the women, peace and security agenda in the region. From 29 November to 1 December 2016, his Office supported the convening of a meeting of the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum in Khartoum, which adopted a three-year strategic plan and a fundraising strategy for the establishment of a secretariat in Kigali.

Promotion of women, youth and civil society

73. From 31 January to 2 February 2017, my Special Envoy convened the Global Open Days on Women, Peace and Security in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the support of the MONUSCO leadership. The discussions offered an opportunity for women leaders in the region to strengthen their leadership capacity, share their experiences on effective participation in political and peace processes and assess the implementation of women's political participation in line with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in their respective countries. Participants called for increased financial support to the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum, and requested that a representative of the Forum participate in the Technical Support Committee and the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

74. The recommendations were discussed at a high-level dialogue on 2 February among the Ministers in charge of gender affairs of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan and Uganda and other representatives of those countries, in the presence of my Special Envoy, my Special Representative and representatives of the African Union and ICGLR. A side meeting was convened by my Special Envoy with the participants of the panel, which recommended the convening of a follow-up meeting of the Ministers in charge of gender affairs to discuss the inclusion of women.

75. In order to strengthen the role of youth in support of peace and stability in the region, the Office of my Special Envoy participated in the ICGLR Multipurpose Youth Forum meeting in Goma from 29 November to 1 December 2016. The meeting brought together youth delegates from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Rwanda and representatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, ICGLR and the United Nations. Participants emphasized the importance of youth-led initiatives to support social cohesion, election monitoring and observation, democratic governance and cross-border

confidence-building. The meeting also adopted a road map for the operationalization of an ICGLR youth centre for peace based in Goma.

Promotion of durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons

76. In Kampala on 24 January 2016, my Special Envoy met with the Ugandan Minister for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Hilary Onek, to discuss the political and security implications of the ongoing refugee crises in the region in line with the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. Mr. Onek highlighted the increasing burden placed on Uganda as a result of the influx of refugees, the lack of progress in the implementation of the tripartite agreements on the voluntary repatriation of refugees between Uganda, UNHCR and Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, respectively, and rising discontent within the Ugandan population. In response to a proposal by my Special Envoy, he agreed to host a regional meeting at the ministerial level on displacement in the Great Lakes region later in 2017 in order to agree on regional actions as envisaged by the Framework.

Judicial cooperation and efforts to combat impunity

77. In Nairobi on 10 and 11 November 2016, the ICGLR Executive Secretary and my Special Envoy convened a meeting to establish a Great Lakes judicial cooperation network, bringing together the directors of prosecution and investigation services of ICGLR member States. The creation of the network is a key milestone in efforts to strengthen and facilitate the administration of justice in the region. It is expected to provide a forum for exchange and cooperation on regional legal action and will contribute significantly to promoting accountability for crimes committed in the region.

78. With the support of the Office of my Special Envoy, ICGLR published, in October 2016, a report on improving access to justice and ending impunity for sexual and gender-based violence in ICGLR member States and a compendium of case law on that subject. The publications are expected to support the ICGLR regional training facility on sexual and gender-based violence in ensuring greater protection for victims of sexual and gender-based violence and accountability for those who commit such crimes.

V. Observations

79. Four years after its signing, the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region remains a vital mechanism to achieve durable peace and stability, as noted by the Heads of State of the signatory countries during the seventh high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism, held in Luanda on 26 October 2016. I commend the successful efforts, led by my Special Envoy, to reform the governance structures of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework and reinvigorate its implementation. I wish to thank Angola for hosting the first meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism held in the region. I also thank the Congo and Uganda for offering to host the eighth and ninth high-level meetings in 2017 and 2018,

respectively. Those developments denote growing ownership of the Framework by the signatories.

80. I am concerned, however, that the gains achieved so far could be negatively affected by the continued presence of non-State armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as other worrying security trends observed in recent months. In particular, incursions by former M23 elements into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, followed by clashes with the Congolese army, represent a serious setback to our stabilization efforts. Urgent and decisive action is required to avoid the resurgence of the M23 rebellion. I call upon the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the leadership of the former M23 to promptly resume joint consultations on the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations, particularly the repatriation of ex-M23 elements still present in Rwanda and Uganda. My Special Envoy and Special Representative are fully engaged in finding a solution to that pressing issue and stand ready to assist the Congolese authorities. As signatories to the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework, I count on the neighbours of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to assist in preventing the former M23 from resuming its illegal activities, which once had a devastating impact on the lives and welfare of scores of civilians in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

81. The prolonged presence of SPLM/A-IO elements in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo also warrants urgent collective action to remove a potential threat to that fragile conflict-affected area. I encourage my Special Envoy and Special Representative to continue their engagement with leaders and institutions in the region to help resolve that issue.

82. I am encouraged by the enhanced cooperation between MONUSCO and FARDC against illegal armed groups, as well as by regional initiatives to address security issues, notably the establishment of a Joint Follow-up Mechanism to deal with ADF. I call upon States of the region and international partners to ensure that the Mechanism is well resourced and effective. I also emphasize the importance of complementary, non-military approaches to resolving the issue of negative forces, including by engaging local communities in conflict prevention and addressing the root causes of conflict in the region.

83. It is my hope that the ongoing dialogue processes in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo will reach successful conclusions and contribute to stability in the region. My Special Adviser, together with my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, will continue to support East African Community-led efforts in the inter-Burundian dialogue. I urge the parties to cooperate with the East African Community Facilitator and to refrain from any action likely to undermine peace efforts. I also call upon East African Community leaders to urge the parties to participate in the dialogue without precondition.

84. I commend CENCO and the Congolese parties on the signing of the political agreement of 31 December 2016. I call upon all Congolese actors to refrain from violence and to take the necessary steps to swiftly implement the agreement. In particular, I encourage all parties to resume talks without further delay, with a view to resolving all outstanding issues. The United Nations will continue to support the political dialogue and the conduct of peaceful, credible, inclusive, transparent and timely elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

85. As other countries in the region prepare for elections in 2017, I call upon all parties to create an environment conducive to the holding of timely, peaceful and credible elections.

86. I commend the governments and the people of the region for their hospitality towards large populations of refugees and asylum seekers, in a context of rising yet underfunded humanitarian needs. I ask them to continue to uphold their obligations under the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol. I emphasize once more the importance of durable solutions championed by the leaders of the region. In that regard, I welcome the offer by the Government of Uganda to host a ministerial meeting on displacement. I urge the international community, as well as regional and subregional organizations, to increase their support to displaced populations, host countries and host communities.

87. Finally, I thank my Special Envoy, my Special Representative and their respective teams for their efforts to promote peace and stability in the region and advance the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. I call upon the Security Council and the international community to continue to assist the signatory States with the implementation of their commitments.

United Nations A/ES-10/745–S/2017/209

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
17 March 2017

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 10 March 2017 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith a statement released by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine in which it condemns the law passed by Israel's Knesset to ban the Muslim call to prayer (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

17-04394 (E) 220317 220317

Please recycle

Annex to the identical letters dated 10 March 2017 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Lack of international accountability has encouraged the occupiers to enact the racist "Muezzin Law"

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemns in the strongest possible terms the Israeli Knesset's approval on first reading of what has become known as the "Muezzin Law". It is yet another instance of the racist legislation that the ruling right in Israel is falling over itself to enact daily with the goal of reinforcing the occupation, gradually imposing Israeli law on Occupied Palestinian Territory and further entrenching its despicable apartheid policy as part of a single-State solution. The law's approval comes as part of the ongoing competition among right-wing factions to appease their extremist settler constituencies. It constitutes a further provocation of Palestinians that will promote enmity and hatred between followers of the divinely revealed religions in Palestine instead of a culture of tolerance and peace.

The Ministry believes that being content with issuing purely formal protests against the law without any practical deterrent measures has emboldened the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu to move ahead with legislative procedures to pass this law in particular, and to push ahead in general with institutionalizing its despicable apartheid regime in Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Ministry calls on the international community and the relevant United Nations agencies to urgently intervene to prevent passage of this law and to guarantee freedom of worship and access to holy places in Palestine. Holding Israel accountable and imposing sanctions for its racist legislation and major human rights violations is the only way to deter the occupation and compel compliance with internationally recognized resolutions.

United Nations S/2017/210

Security Council

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10 March 2017

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Letter dated 10 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am compelled to write to you following receipt of the letter dated 9 March 2017 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. It is of paramount importance for Turkey, a country that attaches the utmost importance to the rule of law and its international commitments, to set the record straight on the distortions and allegations referred to in the aforementioned letter.

First and foremost, I wish to underline that Aydın Sefa Akay, a Turkish national, has been arrested in Ankara on charges of being a member of the Fetullahist Terrorist Organization, which was behind the foiled coup attempt of 15 July 2016. That offence is punishable under the Turkish Penal Code, which applies to all persons in Turkey, all crimes committed in Turkey and all Turkish nationals.

Second, it is important to emphasize that the charges against Mr. Akay are in no way related to his functions as a judge of the Mechanism. On that basis, we have already brought our views to the attention of the Secretariat, based on the applicable legal instruments, including article 29 of the statute of the Mechanism, according to which Mr. Akay does not enjoy immunity before the Turkish judicial authorities for acts performed outside the framework of his assignment under the Mechanism. The relevant provisions of these legal instruments also confirm that immunities cannot be construed as a basis to develop or promote impunity or to impede the course of justice.

Against this background, the President of the Mechanism, on 31 January 2017, in the review proceedings of the *Augustin Ngirabatware* case, to which Mr. Akay had been appointed by the President on 25 July 2016, chose to issue a decision that orders the Government of the Republic of Turkey "to cease all legal proceedings against Judge Akay and take all necessary measures to ensure Judge Akay's release from detention as soon as practicable".

The Mechanism is not entitled to issue such an "order". Article 28 of the statute clearly indicates that States shall cooperate with the Mechanism and that it shall issue orders only in the framework of its sphere of competence, namely, carrying out the residual functions of the International Tribunal for the Former

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Yugoslavia and the former International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda concerning the prosecution of persons indicted by these Tribunals.

It is therefore with deep regret that I am obliged to bring to your attention that, by issuing the aforementioned "order", the Mechanism has clearly overstepped its mandate, conferred upon it by the Security Council. Moreover, the "order" in question constitutes a flagrant and worrying attempt to interfere with the independent judicial process of a Member State. Although States are required to cooperate with the Mechanism in accordance with Council resolution 1966 (2010) and the statute, the relevant provisions cannot be construed as binding upon States when the Mechanism oversteps the scope of its mandate. Therefore, Turkey should not be expected to comply with an "order" issued by the Mechanism when it has abused the authority vested in it. The "order" in question is null and void for Turkey.

Turkey has been a strong supporter of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the former International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Mechanism, which have contributed to the fight against impunity, as well as to the restoration and maintenance of peace and stability in those regions. In this framework, it is my duty to emphasize that the President of the Mechanism is causing undue delay in the administration of justice in the review proceedings of the *Augustin Ngirabatware* case by disregarding, with no valid justification, the relevant articles of the statute of the Mechanism that permit the appointment of new judges precisely in cases of unforeseen vacancies and thus purposefully misusing the authority entrusted to it by the Council. The responsibility stemming from the unnecessary delay caused by the present situation can by no means be ascribed to Turkey.

In the light of the above, Turkey is confident that the Council will consider ways to ensure that the Mechanism abides by its mandate and that it impartially, fairly and efficiently discharges the functions entrusted to it, including by reminding the Mechanism and its President of their sphere of competence and responsibilities and by considering enhanced mechanisms of accountability to the Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter would be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulated as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/71/837–S/2017/211

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda item 31
Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Letter dated 9 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions of my Government, I transmit herewith for your attention the record of the ceasefire violations by the Azerbaijani armed forces during the month of February 2017 (see annex I).*

I also transmit herewith for your attention the record of ceasefire violations registered by the Ministry of Defence of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic during the month of February 2017 (see annex II).*

I kindly request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* Circulated in the language of submission only

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Annex I to the letter dated 9 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan along the State border with the Republic of Armenia

1-28 February 2017

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
1 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik, Ararat regions	4	Small arms and light weapons: 55
	Kayan	1	
	Berkaber	1	
	Jil	1	
	Yeraskh	1	
2 February	Tavush region	2	Small arms and light weapons: 4
	Aygedzor	1	
	Paravakar	1	
3 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik, Ararat regions	5	Small arms and light weapons: 47
	Chinari	1	
	Aygedzor	1	
	Geghamasar	1	
	Yeraskh	2	
4 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik regions	7	Small arms and light weapons: 145
	Aygedzor	1	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 4
	Berkaber	2	
	Vazashen	1	
	Koti	1	
	Berdavan	1	
	Tiujur	1	
5 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik, Ararat regions	7	Small arms and light weapons: 111
	Chinari	2	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 7
	Vazashen	1	
	Berdavan	1	
	Tiujur	1	
	Chambarak	1	
	Yeraskh	1	
6 February	Tavush region	1	Small arms and light weapons: 5
	Chinari	1	
7 February	Tavush region	10	Small arms and light weapons: 97
	Aygedzor	1	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 2
	Chinari	1	
	Paravakar	5	
	Vazashen	3	

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
	Aygehovit	1	
	Barekamavan	1	
8 February	Tavush region	5	Small arms and light weapons: 73
	Chinari	1	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 2
	Paravakar	1	
	Aygepar	1	
	Vazashen	2	
9 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik, Ararat regions	11	Small arms and light weapons: 100
	Chinari	2	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 6
	Aygedzor	2	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 3 (Vahan 3)
	Movses	2	
	Vazashen	1	
	Berdavan	1	
	Vahan	2	
	Yeranukh	1	
10 February	Tavush region	12	Small arms and light weapons: 125
	Aygedzor	3	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 1
	Chinari	1	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 1 (Vazashen 1)
	Vazashen	3	
	Berkaber	2	
	Kayan	2	
	Aygehovit	1	
11 February	Tavush region	10	Small arms and light weapons: 131
	Chinari	3	
	Aygedzor	3	
	Movses	2	
	Aygepar	1	
	Kayan	1	
12 February	Tavush regions	7	Small arms and light weapons: 21
	Chinari	1	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 6
	Aygedzor	1	
	Paravakar	1	
	Movses	1	
	Berkaber	1	
	Berdavan	2	
13 February	Tavush, Vayots Dzor regions	5	Small arms and light weapons: 19
	Chinari	1	
	Aygedzor	2	
	Movses	1	
	Khndzoresk	1	
14 February	Tavush region	5	Small arms and light weapons: 53
	Chinari	2	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 1
	Aygedzor	2	
	Movses	1	

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
15 February	Tavush, Ararat regions	5	Small arms and light weapons: 13/25
	Chinari	2	
	Aygedzor	1	
	Aygepar	1	
	Yeraskh	1	
16 February	Tavush, Ararat regions	4	Small arms and light weapons: 9
	Chinari	2	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 6
	Movses	1	
	Yeraskh	1	
17 February	Tavush region	16	Small arms and light weapons: 212
	Chinari	4	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 27
	Aygedzor	2	Small-calibre machine guns: 49 (Chinari 49)
	Paravakar	3	
	Movses	3	
	N. Karmiraghbyur	3	
	Aygepar	1	
18 February	Tavush region	1	Small arms and light weapons: 3
	Paravakar	1	
19 February	Tavush region	4	Small arms and light weapons: 31
	Chinari	2	
	Paravakar	1	
	Kayan	1	
20 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik regions	2	Small arms and light weapons: 70
	Berdavan	1	
	Jil	1	
21 February	Tavush, Ararat regions	7	Small arms and light weapons: 49
	Chinari	1	
	Aygedzor	2	
	Movses	1	
	Beradvan	1	
	Yeraskh	2	
22 February	Tavush region	8	Small arms and light weapons: 104
	Chinari	2	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 15 (Paravakar 15)
	Paravakar	3	
	Aygepar	1	
	Sevkar	1	
	Vazashen	1	
23 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik regions	16	Small arms and light weapons: 164
	Chinari	7	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 3
	Aygedzor	2	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 5 (Chinari 5)
	Aygepar	1	Large-calibre machine guns: 21 (Chinari 4,
	Paravakar	3	Paravakar 17)

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
	Vazashen	1	
	Kayan	1	
	Jil	1	
24 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik regions	40	Small arms and light weapons: 539
	Chinari	17	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 50
	Aygedzor	1	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 12 (Chinari 12)
	Aygepar	8	Large-calibre machine guns: 57
	Paravakar	1	
	Movses	1	
	Vazashen	8	
	Kayan	2	
	Berdavan	1	
	Jil	1	
25 February	Tavush, Vayots Dzor regions	23	Small arms and light weapons: 211
	Chinari	11	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 43
	Aygedzor	4	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 57 (Chinari 54; Aygedzor 3)
	Paravakar	4	
	Vazashen	2	Large-calibre machine guns: 180
	Movses	1	
	Barcruni	1	
26 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik, Ararat, Vayots Dzor regions	23	Small arms and light weapons: 448
			Small-calibre sniper weapons: 11
	Chinari	4	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 6 (Chinari 3; Aygedzor 3)
	Aygedzor	3	
	Movses	2	
	Paravakar	2	
	Aygehovit	2	
	Baghanis	1	
	Dovegh	1	
	Koti	2	
	Jil	2	
	Tsapatagh	1	
	Chambarak	1	
	Pambak	1	
	Yeraskh	1	
	Khndzorut		
27 February	Tavush, Gegharkunik regions	40	Small arms and light weapons: 4143
	Chinari	9	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 76
	Aygedzor	7	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 33 (Aygedzor 2; Chinari 1; Voskevan 30)
	Paravakar	7	
	Baghanis	4	Large-calibre machine guns: 180
	Koti	3	
	Kayan	2	
	Voskevan	6	
	Geghamasar	1	
	Jil	1	

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
28 February	Tavush region	27	Small arms and light weapons: 293
	Chinari	6	Small-calibre sniper weapons: 2
	Aygedzor	7	Large-calibre sniper weapons: 18 (Aygedzor 13, Vazashen 5)
	Paravakar	8	
	Aygehovit	1	Large- calibre machine guns: 22
	Berdavan	1	
	Vazshen	4	

Annex II to the letter dated 9 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the line of contact with the Nagorno Karabakh Republic

1-28 February 2017

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons/shots*
1 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	17	Small arms and light weapons: 159 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 5 Small-calibre mortars: 1 (Ashaghi Veysali 1)
2 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	16	Small arms and light weapons: 135
3 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	28	Small arms and light weapons: 416 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 25 (Ashagi Abdurakhmanli 25) Large-calibre machine guns: 4
4 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	44	Small arms and light weapons: 137 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 1 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 11 (Yarmja 11) Small-calibre mortars: 98 (Sarijanli 14; Geytape 48; Shikhlyar 9; Taghibeyli 2; Bash Karvend 9; Kengerli 5; Yarmja 11)
5 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	22	Small arms and light weapons: 262 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 9 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 1 (Jraberd 1) Grenade launchers: 2
6 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	18	Small arms and light weapons: 211 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 7 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 3 (Verin Chaylu 3)
7 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	20	Small arms and light weapons: 252 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 18 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 8 (Mehdili 8)
8 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno	55	Small arms and light weapons: 675 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 57

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
	Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan		Large-calibre sniper weapons: 10 (Mehdili 6; Verin Chaylu 4) Large-calibre machine guns: 81 (Levonarkh 6; Verin Chaylu 15; Dastagir 60) Grenade launchers: 1 (Seysulan 1) Small-calibre mortars: 21 (Geytap 6; Bash Karvend 6; Sarijanli 4; Talish 5) Artillery: 22 (Kengerli 1; Bash Karvend 21)
9 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	37	Small arms and light weapons: 148 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 17 Grenade launchers: 6 Small-calibre mortars: 8 (Yarmja 3; Talish 5)
10 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	54	Small arms and light weapons: 930 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 22 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 4 (Kurapatkino 4) Large-calibre machine guns: 10 Small-calibre mortars: 24 (Nuzger 3; Ashaghi Veysali 8; Marzili 1; Sarijanli 3; Yarmja 1; Seysulan 8)
11 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	63	Small arms and light weapons: 505 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 44 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 30 (Gjulistan 30) Small-calibre mortars: 18 (Seysulan 4; Yarmja 2; Namerli 10; Shurabad 2)
12 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	27	Small arms and light weapons: 387 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 40 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 1 (Chakirli 1) Small-calibre mortars: 7 (Bash Karvend 1; Shikhlyar 4; Talish 2)
13 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	67	Small arms and light weapons: 863 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 15 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 19 (Taghibeyli 8; Verin Chaylu 1; Gyulistan 10) Grenade launchers: 8 Small-calibre mortars: 41 (Horadiz 4; Kurapatkino 2; Geytape 7; Yarmja 2; Nemerli 13; Talish 10; Sarijanli 3) Artillery: 13 (Shikhlyar 5; Kengerli 8)
14 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	28	Small arms and light weapons: 378 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 13 Large-calibre machine guns: 2
15 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	30	Small arms and light weapons: 568 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 7 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 2 (Ashaghi Veysali 1; Jraberd 1) Large-calibre machine guns: 35 Small-calibre mortars: 3 (Yusifjamli 1; Marzili 2)

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
16 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	31	Small arms and light weapons: 437 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 8 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 17 (Ashaghi Veysali 2; Shikhlyar 5; Seysulan 10) Large-calibre machine guns: 30 Grenade launchers: 4 Small-calibre mortars: 1 (Geytape 1)
17 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	59	Small arms and light weapons: 684 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 19 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 2 (Mehdili 2) Large-calibre machine guns: 5 (Jraberd 5) Grenade launchers: 5 (Marzili 4; Yarmja 1) Small-calibre mortars: 16 (Yarmja 15; Talish 1) Artillery: 1 (Jraberd 1)
18 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	53	Small arms and light weapons: 568 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 16 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 3 (Talish 3) Large-calibre machine guns: 6 (Levonarkh 6) Small-calibre mortars: 3 (Yusifjanli 3)
19 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	27	Small arms and light weapons: 320 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 7 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 3 (Levonarkh 3) Grenade launchers: 1
20 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	42	Small arms and light weapons: 534 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 14 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 6 (Jraberd 6)
21 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	59	Small arms and light weapons: 895 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 18 Large-calibre sniper weapons: (m Karachuk17; Geytape 2; Marzili 2)
22 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	88	Small arms and light weapons: 1997 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 21 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 6 (m. Karachuk 1; Kurapatkino 3; Jraberd 2) Large-calibre machine guns: 40 Small-calibre mortars: 36 (Yusifjanli 1; Bash Karvend 15; Talish 20)
23 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	59	Small arms and light weapons: 1575 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 16 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 3 (Kurapatkino 3) Grenade launchers: 5 (Gyulistan 5) Small-calibre mortars: 55 (Yusifjanli 12; Kengerli 20; Sarijanli

Date	*Direction*	*Incidents*	*Type of weapons shots*
			20; Shurabad 1; Talish 2) Artillery: 10 (Kengerli 10)
24 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	50	Small arms and light weapons: 784 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 44 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 4 (Mehdili 3; Jraberd 1) Grenade launchers: 2 Small-calibre mortars: 4 (Kurapatkino 3; Sarijanli 1)
25 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	90	Small arms and light weapons: 1066 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 18 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 10 (Kurapatkino 2; Dastagir 4; Gyulistan 4) Large-calibre machine guns: 30 Grenade launchers: 12 Small-calibre mortars: 127 (Ashaghi Veysali 20; Kurapatkino 10; Shikhlyar 82; Seysulan 4; Yarmja 7; Talish 4) Large-calibre mortars: 4 (Talish 4) Artillery: 35 (Shikhlyar 12; Talish 23)
26 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	94	Small arms and light weapons: 1990 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 43 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 13 (Ashaghi Veysali 3; Gyulistan 10) Large-calibre machine guns: 146 Grenade launchers: 4 Small-calibre mortars: 45 (Ashaghi Veysali 21; Taghibeyli 2; Talish 15; Gyulistan 7) Artillery: 42 (Talish 42)
27 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	57	Small arms and light weapons: 1080 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 25 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 1 (Horadiz 1) Large-calibre machine guns: 12 Grenade launchers: 8 Small-calibre mortars: 36 (Talish 36)
28 February	On the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Azerbaijan	76	Small arms and light weapons: 2086 Small-calibre sniper weapons: 30 Large-calibre sniper weapons: 60 (Nuzger 6; Talish 1; Taghibeyli 2; Gyulistan 50; Dastagir 1) Large-calibre machine guns: 16 Grenade launchers: 3 Small-calibre mortars: 31

From 1 to 28 February, 2 soldiers of the Nagorno Karabakh Defence Army were killed and 6 soldiers were wounded from Azerbaijani side.

At 0400 on 25 February, in the vicinity of the villages of Shikhlyar and Taghibeyli, Azerbaijani armed forces attempted an attack on the positions of the Nagorno Karabakh Defence Army, which was neutralized by Nagorno Karabakh military units.

United Nations S/2017/212

Security Council

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English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 10 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith bulletins from the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period 7-10 March 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) P. **Iliichev**
Acting Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 10 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Humanitarian bulletin of the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (6 March 2017)

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by the Russian Federation

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides has carried out six humanitarian operations in Aleppo city, during which residents of the districts of Aqyul, Malakiyah, Halmaniyah, Hamdaniyah-4, Bani Zayd and Shaykh Maqsud received 0.94 tons of bread and 4.8 tons of bottled drinking water.

Over the past 24 hours, humanitarian assistance has been provided to 2,320 residents. A total of 5.74 tons of humanitarian cargo has been distributed to the population.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by international organizations

Russian aircraft dropped 20.4 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products), received by the Syrian authorities through the United Nations, to the city of Dayr al-Zawr.

Information bulletin of the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (7 March 2017)

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, two ceasefire agreements have been signed with Abu Tabbah and Taqad in Aleppo governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 1,319.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

Over the past 24 hours, six application forms were signed. The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire of 27 February 2016 has increased to 127.

The number of populated areas that the Syrian government forces have liberated from armed groups of the international terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has increased to 124.

Over the past 24 hours, government forces have gained control of 90.4 square kilometres. A total area of 2,824.7 square kilometres has been liberated since 1 January 2017.

Observance of the ceasefire regime

At 0000 hours on 30 December 2016, a ceasefire came into force in accordance with the consolidated agreement on a comprehensive resolution of the Syrian crisis.

The number of Syrian opposition armed groups that have joined the ceasefire regime remains unchanged at 64.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the consolidated agreement has reported six violations: one in Damascus governorate, one in Ladhiqiyah governorate and four in Hama governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported 15 violations in the following governorates: 4 in Damascus, 3 in Aleppo, 3 in Homs, 3 in Hama and 2 in Dar'a.

During its investigations of these incidents, the Russian representative office was unable to confirm any of the 15 violations.

Additional information

A "regime of silence" went into effect in the Eastern Ghuta district of Damascus governorate at 0001 hours (Damascus time) on 6 March and continued through 2359 hours on 20 March 2017. No violations have been reported.

Humanitarian bulletin of the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (7 March 2017)

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by the Russian Federation

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides has carried out eight humanitarian operations in the following governorates: six in Aleppo, one in Ladhiqiyah and one in Qunaytirah governorates.

In Aleppo city, in the districts of Hannanu Shimaliyah, Bani Zayd, Qadi Askar, and at the Malik School (in the district of Firdaws) and the Training and Education Centre (Hamdaniyah-4 district), 0.94 tons of bread and 4.8 tons of bottled drinking water were provided to residents.

One hundred food parcels, as well as stationery supplies and children's toys, were delivered to the Muhammad Nabil Darwish day-care centre in the town of Kirsana (Ladhiqiyah governorate). An additional 400 food parcels were provided to residents of Jaba in Qunaytirah governorate.

Over the past 24 hours, humanitarian assistance has been provided to 2,820 residents. In total, 8.26 tons of humanitarian cargo have been distributed to the population.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by international organizations

Russian aircraft dropped 20.4 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products), received by the Syrian authorities through the United Nations, to the city of Dayr al-Zawr.

Information bulletin of the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (8 March 2017)

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, 14 ceasefire agreements have been signed with Mubarakat in Hama governorate, Salkhad, Rimat Hazim, Mazra'at al-Sakaka (Sakana), Sakir, Rushaydah, Aslakhah, Mukayzarah (Manadra), Shabki (Shubayki), Karak (Karas), Suwaba (Tha'lah), Karrasah, Uyun and Miyamas (Mimas) in Suwayda governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 1,333.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

Over the past 24 hours, eight application forms were signed. The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire of 27 February 2016 has increased to 135.

The number of populated areas that Syrian government forces have liberated from armed groups of the international terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has increased to 145.

Over the past 24 hours, government forces have gained control of 83.6 square kilometres. A total area of 2,907.7 square kilometres has been liberated since 1 January 2017.

Observance of the ceasefire regime

At 0000 hours on 30 December 2016, a ceasefire came into force in accordance with the consolidated agreement on a comprehensive resolution of the Syrian crisis.

The number of Syrian opposition armed groups that have joined the ceasefire regime remains unchanged at 64.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the consolidated agreement has reported 13 violations in the following governorates: 5 in Hama, 4 in Ladhiqiyah, 3 in Damascus and 1 in Idlib.

The Turkish representative office has reported 14 violations in the following governorates: 7 in Aleppo, 5 in Damascus and 2 in Ladhiqiyah.

During its investigations of these incidents, the Russian representative office was unable to confirm any of the 14 violations.

Humanitarian bulletin of the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (8 March 2017)

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by the Russian Federation

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides has carried out six humanitarian operations in Aleppo city, during which residents received 3,000 hot meals in the districts of Old Shaba', Old Aleppo and Shaykh Maqsud, at schools in the districts of Firdaws and Sukarri and in a mosque in the district of Karm-al-Maz.

Humanitarian cargo (food products, essential items and medication) has been prepared for upcoming deliveries to towns in Aleppo, Ladhiqiyah and Damascus governorates.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by international organizations

Russian aircraft dropped 20.4 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products), received by the Syrian authorities through the United Nations, to the city of Dayr al-Zawr.

Information bulletin of the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (9 March 2017)

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, two ceasefire agreements have been signed with the town of Biqariyah in Ladhiqiyah governorate and the district of Wa'r in the city of Homs.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 1,335.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire of 27 February 2016 remains unchanged at 135.

The number of populated areas that the Syrian government forces have liberated from armed groups of the international terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has increased to 171.

Over the past 24 hours, government forces have gained control of 116 square kilometres. A total area of 3,023.7 square kilometres has been liberated since 1 January 2017.

Observance of the ceasefire regime

At 0000 hours on 30 December 2016, a ceasefire came into force in accordance with the consolidated agreement on a comprehensive resolution of the Syrian crisis.

The number of Syrian opposition armed groups that have joined the ceasefire regime remains unchanged at 64.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the consolidated agreement has reported seven violations: one in Damascus governorate, five in Ladhiqiyah governorate and one in Hama governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported 10 violations in the following governorates: 2 in Aleppo, 3 in Damascus, 1 in Dar'a, 2 in Idlib, 1 in Hama and 1 in Homs.

During its investigations of these incidents, the Russian representative office was unable to confirm any of the 10 violations.

Humanitarian bulletin of the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (9 March 2017)

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by the Russian Federation

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides has carried out nine humanitarian operations in the following governorates: eight in Aleppo and one in Damascus.

In Aleppo city (in the Bani Zayd, Jabal Badro, Shaykh Sa'id, Balat, Zahra', Shaykh Maqsud and New Shahba' districts) and in the town of Ajami (Aleppo governorate), 7.2 tons of bottled drinking water and 600 food parcels were provided to residents. Another 400 food parcels were provided to residents of Jisrayn (Damascus governorate).

Over the past 24 hours, humanitarian assistance has been provided to 3,400 residents. In total, 12.1 tons of humanitarian cargo have been distributed to the population.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic by international organizations

Russian aircraft dropped 20.4 tons of humanitarian cargo (food products), received by the Syrian authorities through the United Nations, to the city of Dayr al-Zawr.

Information bulletin of the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic (10 March 2017)

Reconciliation of opposing sides

Over the past 24 hours, three ceasefire agreements have been signed, with Raha and Umm Ruwaq in Suwayda governorate and Karm Fawzi in Ladhiqiyah governorate.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process has increased to 1,338.

Negotiations on joining the ceasefire regime continued with armed opposition groups in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, Homs and Qunaytirah governorates.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire of 27 February 2016 remains unchanged at 135.

The number of populated areas that Syrian government forces have liberated from armed groups of the international terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains unchanged at 171.

Over the past 24 hours, government forces have gained control of 23 square kilometres. A total area of 3,046.7 square kilometres has been liberated since 1 January 2017.

Observance of the ceasefire regime

At 0000 hours on 30 December 2016, a ceasefire came into force in accordance with the consolidated agreement on a comprehensive resolution of the Syrian crisis.

The number of Syrian opposition armed groups that have joined the ceasefire regime is 64.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the consolidated agreement has reported eight violations: three in Damascus governorate, two in Ladhiqiyah governorate and three in Hama governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported 22 violations in the following governorates: 7 in Aleppo, 5 in Damascus, 3 in Dar'a, 4 in Idlib, 1 in Hama and 2 in Homs.

During its investigations, the Russian representative office confirmed 1 of the incidents and was unable to confirm the other 21.

United Nations S/2017/213

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 11 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to draw your attention to the following:

On the morning of Saturday, 11 March 2017, armed terrorist groups used high-explosive devices to blow up two civilian buses in the Bab Musalla area of the city of Damascus. A preliminary count indicated that 40 civilians were killed and 120 injured.

That cowardly terrorist attack coincides with the ongoing bombardments by armed terrorist groups of several residential Damascus neighbourhoods with rockets and mortar shells. Those bombardments have killed and injured a large number of civilians, and caused extensive damage to public and private property, including hospitals and schools.

The new attack comes in the wake of recent victories by the Syrian Arab Army against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Nusrah Front and associated entities in various regions, including Dayr al-Zawr, Tadmur (Palmyra), northeast Aleppo governorate and Rif Dimashq governorate. It reflects the rejection by those terrorist organizations of the reconciliation processes under way in many regions.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns that terrorist attack and the other vicious crimes being committed by groups associated with the terrorist Al-Qaida and ISIL organizations, which are supported by Governments and regimes known to all. It reiterates that all parties taking part in the Astana and Geneva talks should dissociate themselves from terrorist organizations.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Secretary-General and the Security Council to condemn this cowardly attack, to refrain from providing cover for its perpetrators and the Governments of States that back them, to consolidate international counter-terrorism efforts and to coordinate and cooperate fully with the Syrian Government. It calls on the Security Council to compel the Governments and regimes of the States that support the terrorist groups — above all the regimes of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and certain Western States — to stop all forms of support for those terrorist groups, and in particular to stop providing arms, training, safe havens and financing. The Security Council must compel those regimes to stop making a mockery of international peace and security, to cease their violations of

international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and to fully implement United Nations and Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions, including resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), as well as the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the resolution adopted at the conclusion of the fifth United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review.

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations A/ES-10/746–S/2017/214

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
17 March 2017

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 13 March 2017 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith a statement released by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine on the expansion of the illegal settlements activities of Israel, which constitute an obstacle to the efforts of the envoy of the United States, Mr. Greenblatt (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations

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Please recycle

Annex to the identical letters dated 13 March 2017 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs: heightened settlement activity is an Israeli attempt to obstruct the visit of the American envoy Jason Greenblatt

The Government of Israel, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, continues to implement its settlement plans, which are aimed at swallowing up more Palestinian land. It has been revealed that the occupiers have taken measures and engaged in wide-scale land levelling activity in preparation for the construction of thousands of new residential units in occupied Jerusalem and its environs, particularly in Sha'fat, Bayt Jala, Waljah and other locations. They have also begun building wide roads for settlers on Palestinian land in order to link West Bank settlements with one another and with Israel itself.

The Ministry condemns in the strongest terms possible the ongoing settlement and Judaization activities being carried out by the occupiers. The primary aim of Netanyahu's extremist settlement policy is to put an end to the two-State solution and to close the door completely on any possibility of establishing a viable, geographically contiguous and sovereign State of Palestine that exists alongside Israel. The Ministry affirms that this escalation in settlement activity is an attempt to pre-empt and obstruct American and international efforts to revive negotiations between the Israeli and Palestinian sides, particularly the important forthcoming visit to the region by the American envoy, Jason Greenblatt.

The Ministry calls on the international community to shoulder its legal and political responsibilities, and calls on it to rapidly take political action in order to preserve the chance of achieving peace based on the two-State solution.